CORNUCOPIA

Turkey for Connoisseurs

Issue 47 2012

DUTCH MASTERS

How the Netherlands captured the Levant

SIMPLY PERFECT

A country konak of unassuming charm

CAPITAL SURPRISE

Uncovering Ankara's hidden assets

SCENTS OF SUMMER

Cool, crisp watermelon and fabulous fizz

QUEEN OF THE NOMADS

JOSEPHINE POWELL

Images of a Lost Anatolia

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Cover: Josephine Powell, photographer and ethnographer.
Photograph courtesy of the Koç Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, Istanbul. See page 18

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CORNUCOPIA

TURKEY FOR CONNOISSEURS
ISSUE 47, 2012

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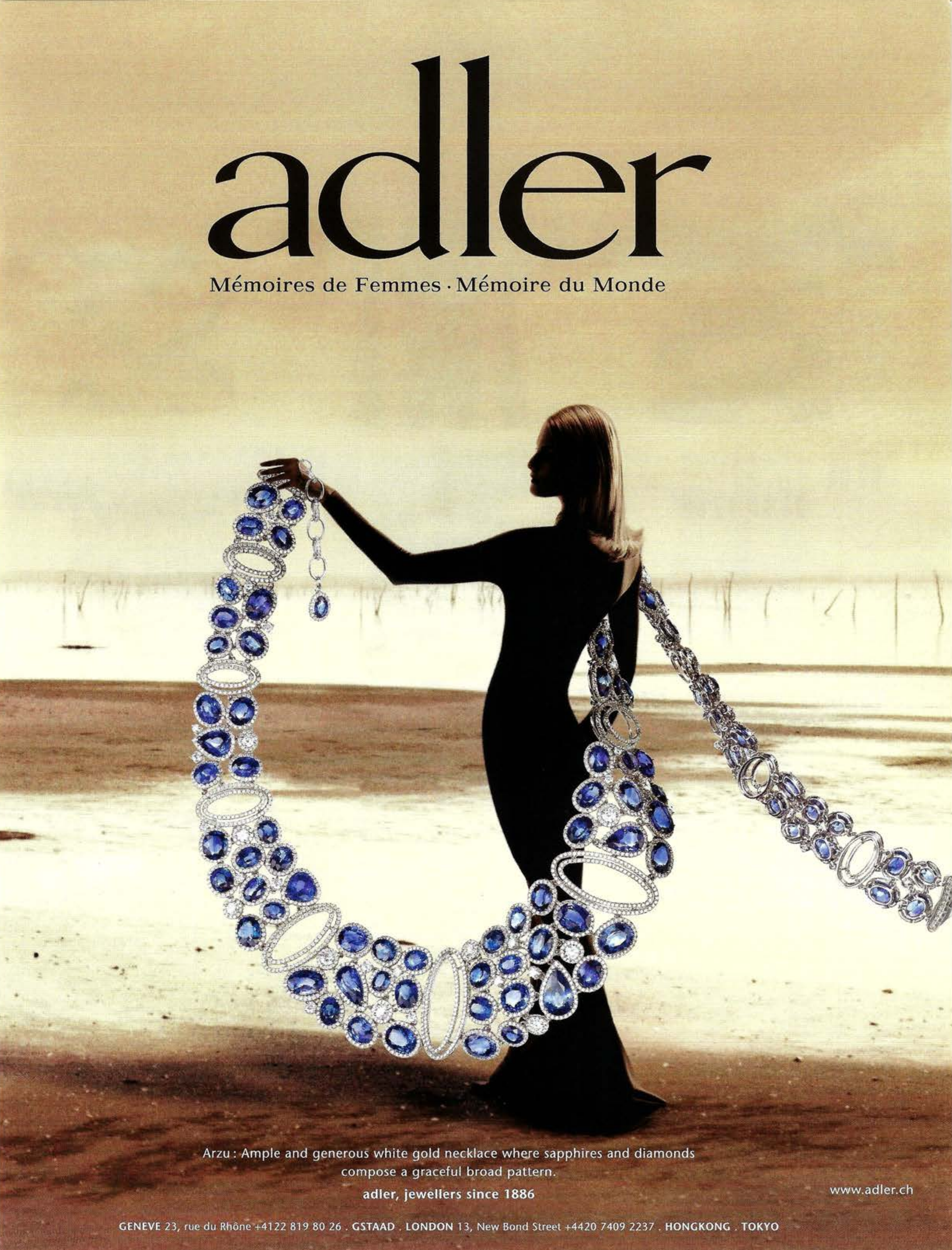
THE ORIGINAL 'CORNUCOPIA'
The Latin *cornu copiæ* or 'horn of plenty', a horn overflowing with flowers, fruit and corn; symbol of prosperity and abundance in the cities of Anatolia.

ISSN 1301-8175



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A collection of Uzbek chapans, late 19th century

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Polychrome, underglaze-painted, stoneware Iznik plate.

Photograph by Fritz von der Schulenburg

CONNOISSEUR

ISTANBUL AND AMSTERDAM CELEBRATE 400 YEARS OF TRADE, TRAVEL AND TULIPS; BYZANTINE MASTERPIECES ARE REUNITED IN NEW YORK; AND LONDON GOES FOR GOLD

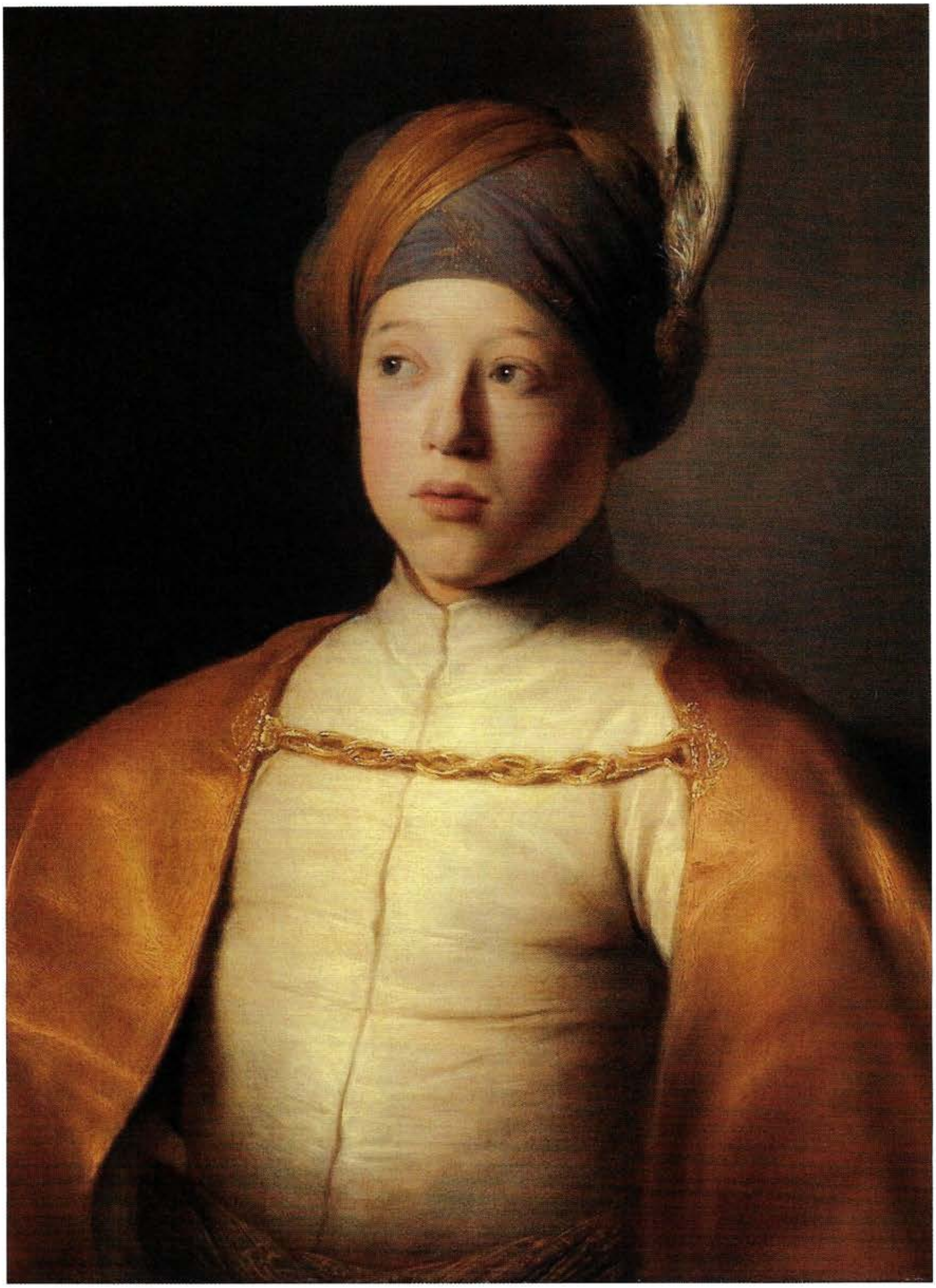
GILDED YOUTH

DUTCH MASTERS OF THE GOLDEN AGE CUT A DASH ON THE BOSPHORUS

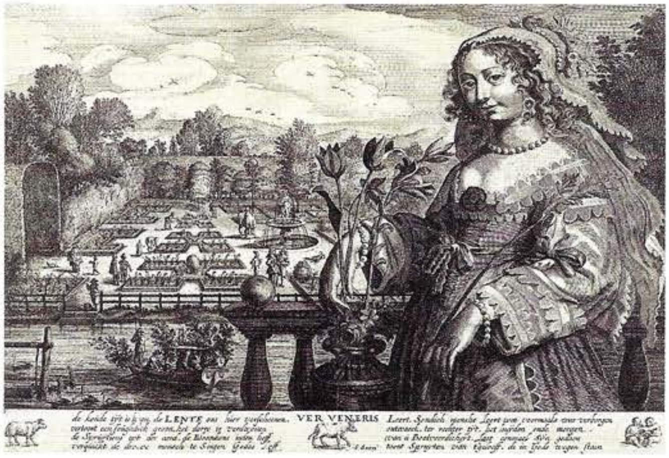
As part of the celebrations of 400 years of links between Turkey and the Netherlands, Istanbul's Sakıp Sabancı Museum (SSM) has mounted an unprecedented exhibition in Istanbul: a glorious tribute to Dutch painting. Rembrandt and His Contemporaries is a panorama of 17th-century Dutch art, in which every school and fashion is skilfully represented with at least one superb example, mostly from the Rijksmuseum, which is now partially closed for refurbishment. There are Cuyp cattle, cool interiors, crisp canals by Berckheyde, a luminous Vermeer, striking portraits by Hals and others, and a titanic sea battle by Van der Velde – and Oriental elements, too. This sensitive portrait of a boy in a sumptuous turban and cape by Rembrandt's contemporary Jan Lievens – from a private collection in New York – is a glowing example of the artist's mastery.

Both Rembrandt and Lievens painted Oriental heads, a vogue said to have begun with the visit of the Persian ambassador Musa Beg in 1625–27. Another exhibit is Rembrandt's music master in a turban and Oriental costume, painted when he was 20 in 1626.

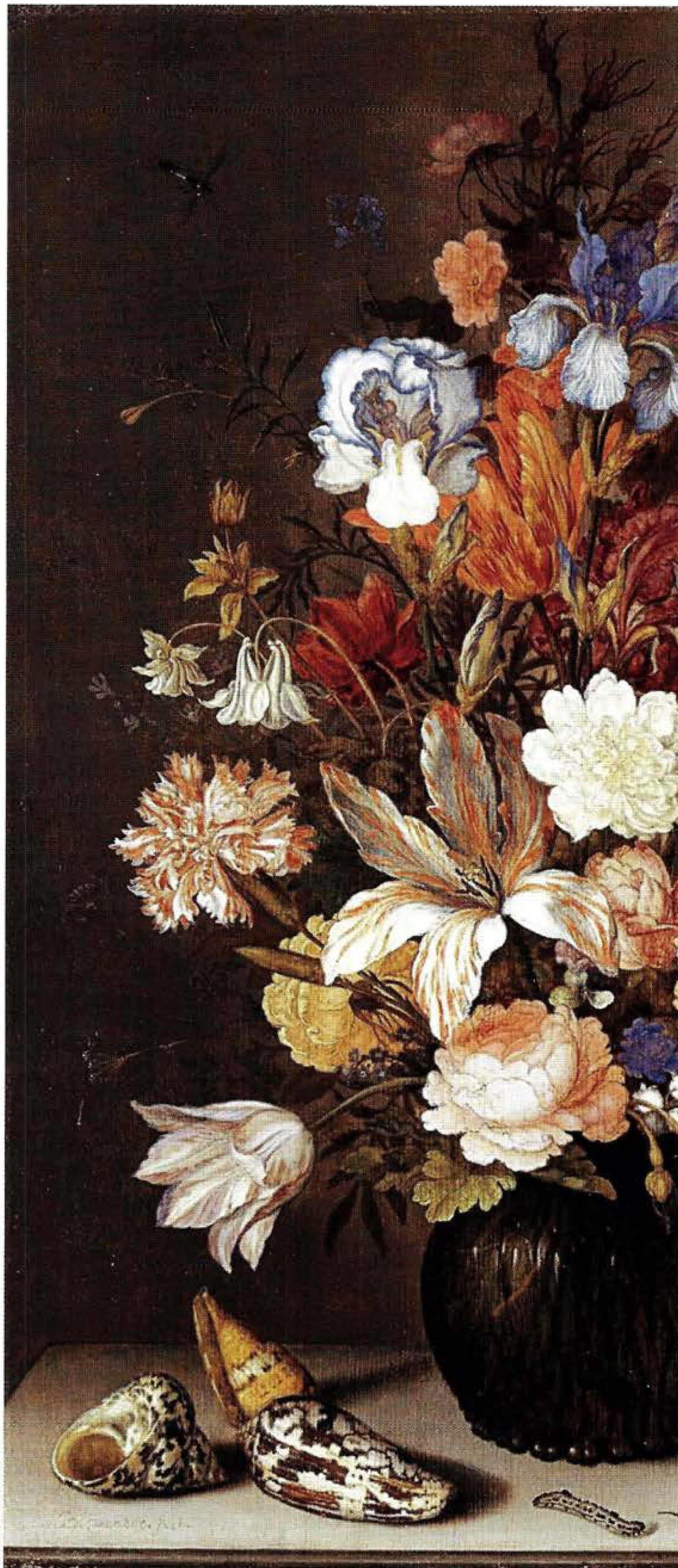
Rembrandt and His Contemporaries: The Golden Age of Dutch Art, Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Istanbul, until June 10 (muze.sabanciuniv.edu)



BOY IN A CAPE AND A TURBAN, C1631, BY JAN LIEVENS, AT THE SAKIP SABANCI MUSEUM (PRIVATE COLLECTION, NEW YORK)



ROLAND SPEK/MUSEUM GEELVINCK


RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM

AMSTERDAM'S OTTOMAN SUMMER

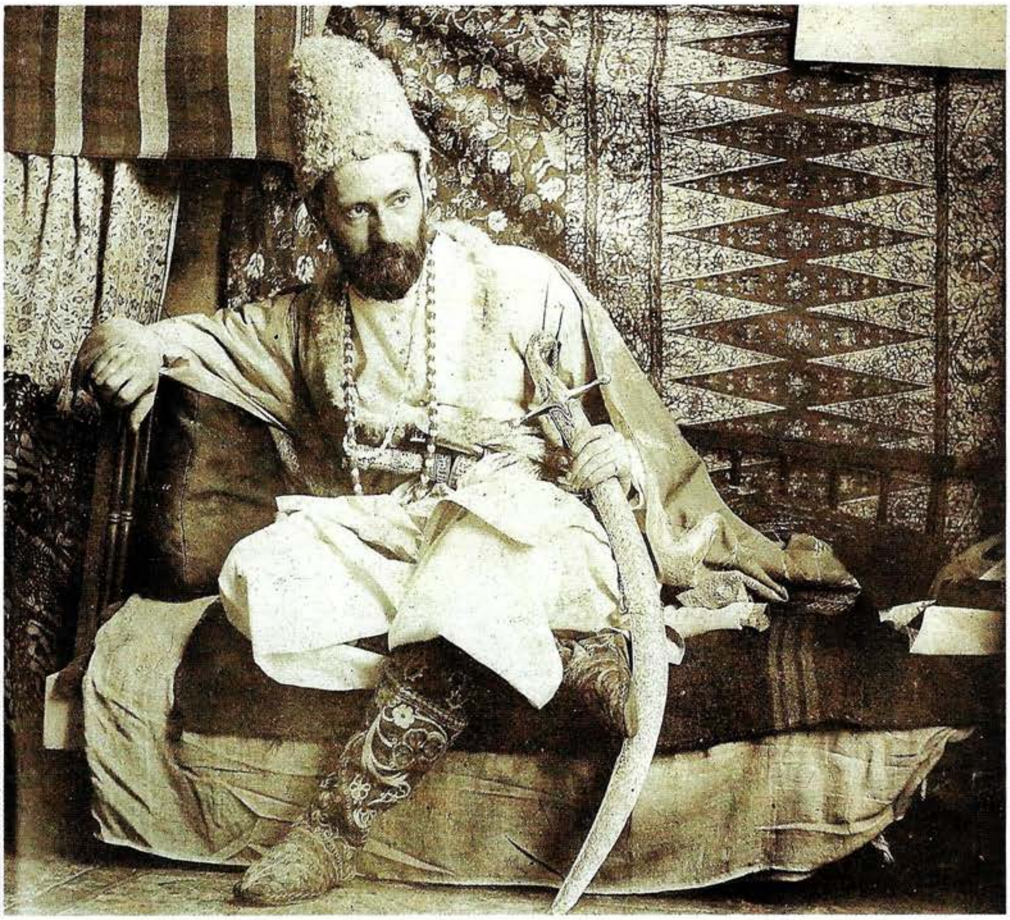
△△ Horticulture has always played an important part in Dutch–Turkish relations. 'Springtime', c1650 (top), is from a set of engravings from the Rijksmuseum by Salomon Savery (1593–1683) on show at the SSM's Dutch exhibition (see page 7). Tulips, newly arrived from the Ottoman Empire, can be seen in bloom in the formal garden behind the fashionable young woman with the come-hither look, who is also holding tulips. What looks like a secular paean to spring is undercut by elements of Protestant moralising.

△ A very similar garden can be found today in Amsterdam at the **Geelvinck House Museum,** where 2,000 historic tulips have been planted. This handsome canal mansion, built in 1687 by a merchant who had made a fortune from trade with the Levant and points east, is hosting a series of exhibitions this year, including 'Yalıs along the Bosphorus' (see opposite).

▷ Tulips of several varieties are also a feature of Balthasar van der Ast's 'Still Life with Flowers', another loan to the SSM from the Rijksmuseum. The artist rendered every petal with total accuracy, but the bouquet is a fiction, since the flowers could not have been in bloom at the same time.

Further anniversary celebrations include **Ottomania: The Turkish World through Western Eyes (1500–1750)**, with prints by Dürer, Rembrandt and Tiepolo, and the photographer Ahmet Polat's gritty **Modern Turkey**, both at the Rijksmuseum until May 7. **The Prince and the Pasha,** at the Dutch National Archives in the Hague, includes letters between the Prince of Orange and the admiral Halil Pasha, who first invited the Dutch to send an envoy to the Ottoman Empire in 1612.

The Chamber of Levant Trade: Dutch Merchants and Ottoman Sultans
The Amsterdam Museum until August 26. See feature, page 20



NETHERLANDS INSTITUTE FOR ART HISTORY

ESCAPE FROM THE MUDDY DITCH

△ Marius Bauer (1864–1932), the consummate Dutch Orientalist, has been to the Oriental shops *(writes Robert Chenciner)*. He sports a mountain shepherd's sheepskin hat of the kind worn in Daghestan, a white Circassian coat with fur lapels, embroidered leather boots from Istanbul or Aleppo, and a jewelled sabre which he could have bought anywhere from Istanbul to Delhi. The hangings are Indian and Indonesian.

Bauer was 21 and 'much talked about' when he went east to escape the 'muddy ditch' realism of the Hague School, also known as the Grey School. When he reached Istanbul he was overwhelmed: 'I have now a goal in sight, something that I entirely lacked before this time.'

He travelled widely and worked from photographs, including those by Félix Bonfils, as well as from memory and his vivid imagination. A critic described his work as 'an undecipherable harmony of grey-white, blue-white, rose-white, brilliant colours in subdued tones, whence arises Stamboul with its bright cupolas, like a flock of sheep rounding themselves against a pale copper sky'. **Marius Bauer in Turkey** is at the Grote of Sint Janskerk, Schiedam, until July 8 (stedelijkmuseumschiedam.nl)

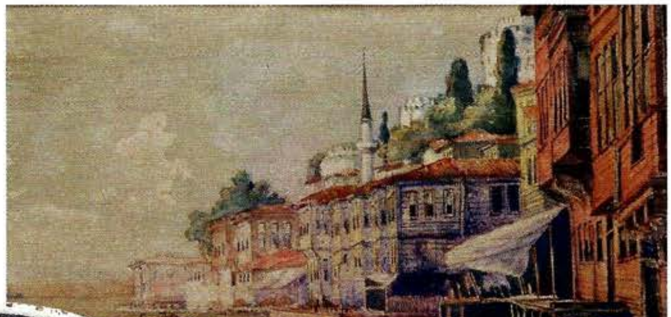
MARTIN PATERNOTTE

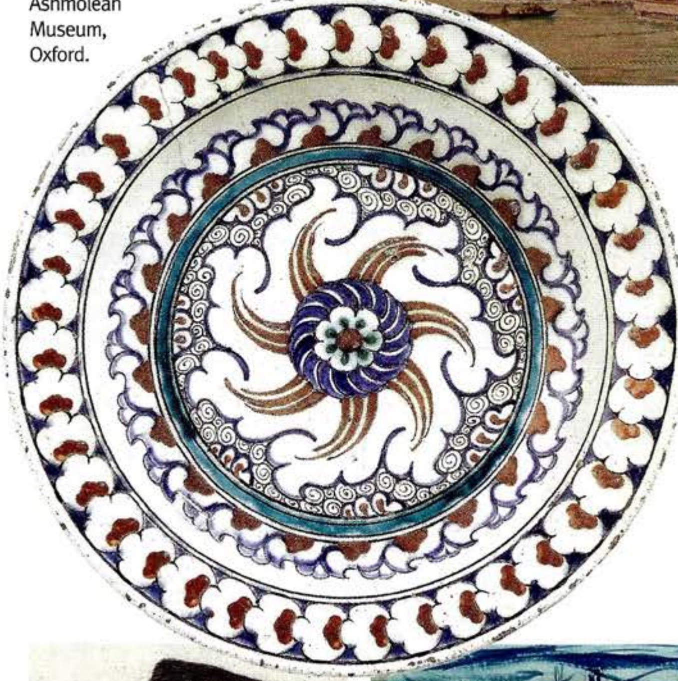
PATERNOTTE'S PATINA

△ The photographer and interior designer Martin Paternotte has lovingly captured the ambience of Istanbul's waterfront houses. **Yalıs Along the Bosphorus: Living in Historical Splendour** is at the Museum Geelvinck, Amsterdam, until June 11 (www.geelvinckhinlopenhuis.nl)

IZNIK WITH A TWIST

▽ Seen in 2010 at the show 'Couleurs d'Orient' in Brussels, this Iznik dish with an unusual swirling cloud motif in the centre, dated c1585–90, has now reached Sotheby's, London, where it is in the Ottoman sale **An Eye for Opulence** on April 24 (est £10,000–15,000). A very similar dish is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.





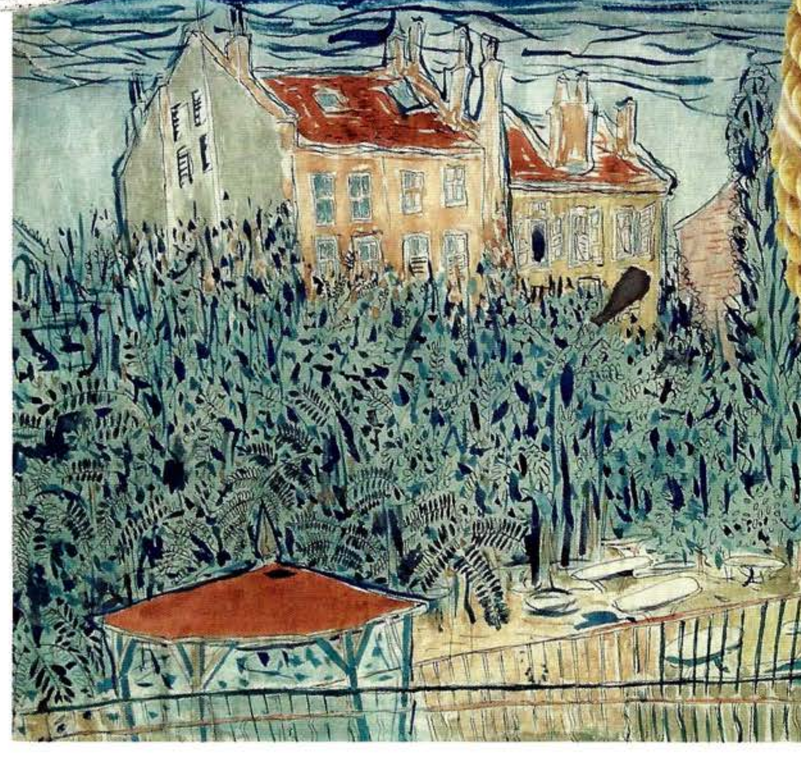
ISTANBUL IMPRESSIONS

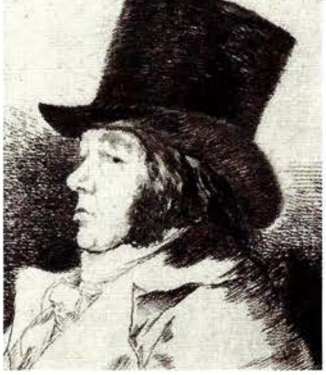
△▽ The SSM has the largest cache of paintings from the late-Ottoman to the early-Republic period. Rarely seen, these Turkish artists are getting an airing at the same time as the Dutch masters (see page 7), and the progression is an oddly happy one. Best-loved is Fikret Muallâ, who went to the Saint-Joseph Lycée in the old quarter of Moda, depicted below. In 1939 he settled in Paris, where he spent the rest of his life. Mehmet Ali Laga, born in Tripoli, went to the Kuleli military academy on the Bosphorus until 1898, the year he painted the yalıs above. He settled in Istanbul in 1907. (muze.sabanciuniv.edu)

TIMELESS GOLD

▷ One of the earliest gold vessels in existence, this amazing Anatolian ewer, dating to 2500–2400BC, features in **Gold: Power and Allure,** (Goldsmiths' Hall, London, June 1 – July 28). Two similar examples are in Ankara's Museum of Anatolian Civilisations and at the Met in New York. Strikingly modern in design, it was raised from a single sheet of gold and embossed, with an ancient swastika symbol on the base. The handle was added separately.

ABOVE LEFT 'SEASHORE HOUSES', 1898 WATERCOLOUR, BY MEHMET ALI LAGA (1878–1947)
BELOW 'MODA', UNDATED WATERCOLOUR BY FIKRET MUALLÂ (1903–67), BOTH AT THE SSM
LEFT IZNIK DISH, 1585–90, 31CM, AT SOTHEBY'S
FAR LEFT GOYA SELF-PORTRAIT AT THE PERA MUSEUM





GOYA GOES TO PERA

△The great Spanish painter Francisco Goya (1746–1828) makes his first appearance in Istanbul at the Pera Museum (April 20 – July 29) in **Goya: Witness of His Time.** His work spans the spectrum from court portraits to nightmare visions of war. This famous self-portrait shows him as a well-established and self-confident figure in a top hat. (en.peramuzesi.org.tr)

LEFT ANATOLIAN GOLD EWER, C2500–2400BC, AT THE GOLDSMITHS' HALL, LONDON (GILBERT COLLECTION, VICTORIA & ALBERT MUSEUM)

SILVER AND IVORY

BYZANTINE BRILLIANCE IN NEW YORK

Buried in Cyprus to foil Arab invaders in the 8th century, nine Byzantine silver plates made a century earlier in Constantinople are being exhibited in New York – though at two separate venues *(writes Charlotte Roueché)*.

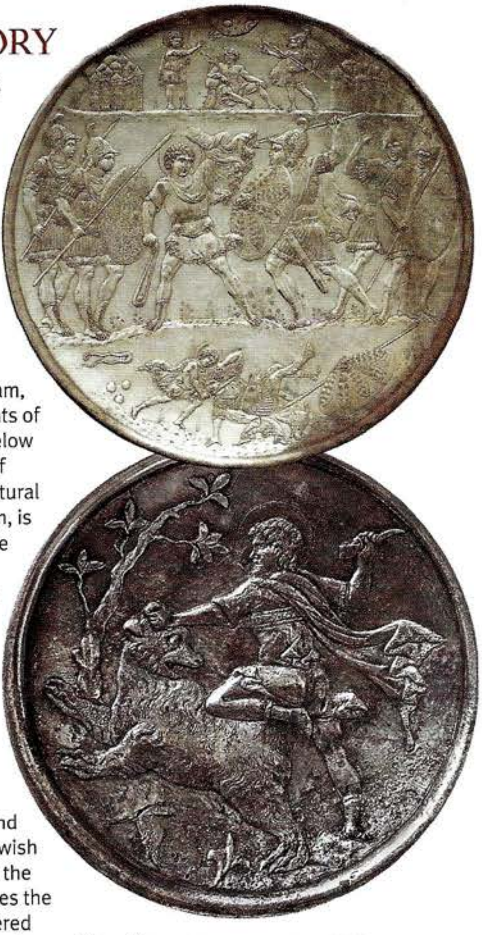
Made in 629–30, at a time of transition from Christianity to Islam, the plates depict the achievements of David. 'David Fighting a Bear' (below right), just 140mm wide, is one of three on show at the Onassis Cultural Center. Suitably larger, at 494mm, is David's battle with Goliath (above right), one of the six on display 30 blocks north at the Met. Both are cast, hammered, engraved, punched and chased and were dispersed after excavation.

The Christian world at the dawn of Islam was no simple cultural monolith. This presents a problem in that the visitor to the Met must be introduced to Syriac, Coptic, Aramaic, Arabic and Greek speakers, Christian and Jewish religious communities, all within the same empire. On top of this comes the Sassanian empire, which conquered the whole area in the early 7th century before being beaten back by the emperor Heraclius, whose story is reflected in the David plates.

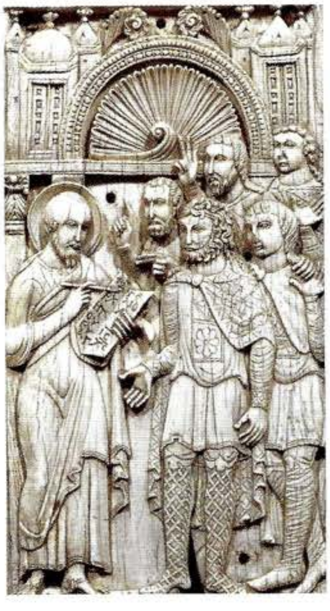
The result is the kind of exhibition that makes you hungry for more. One overriding impression is the energy of local cultures, especially in Egypt – exemplified by 14 ivory panels from Alexandria of the story of St Mark. Dating to the 7th or 8th century, they belong to six different museums but are reunited in New York at the Met.

There is a helpful focus on the constant flow of trade, with objects and designs passing between cultures. Some items (from Egypt and Russia) illustrated in the excellent catalogue never made it to New York. But this show, the latest and perhaps the most ambitious in a great series, the result in large part of the vision of the Met's curator of Byzantine art, Helen Evans, is both rich and enriching.

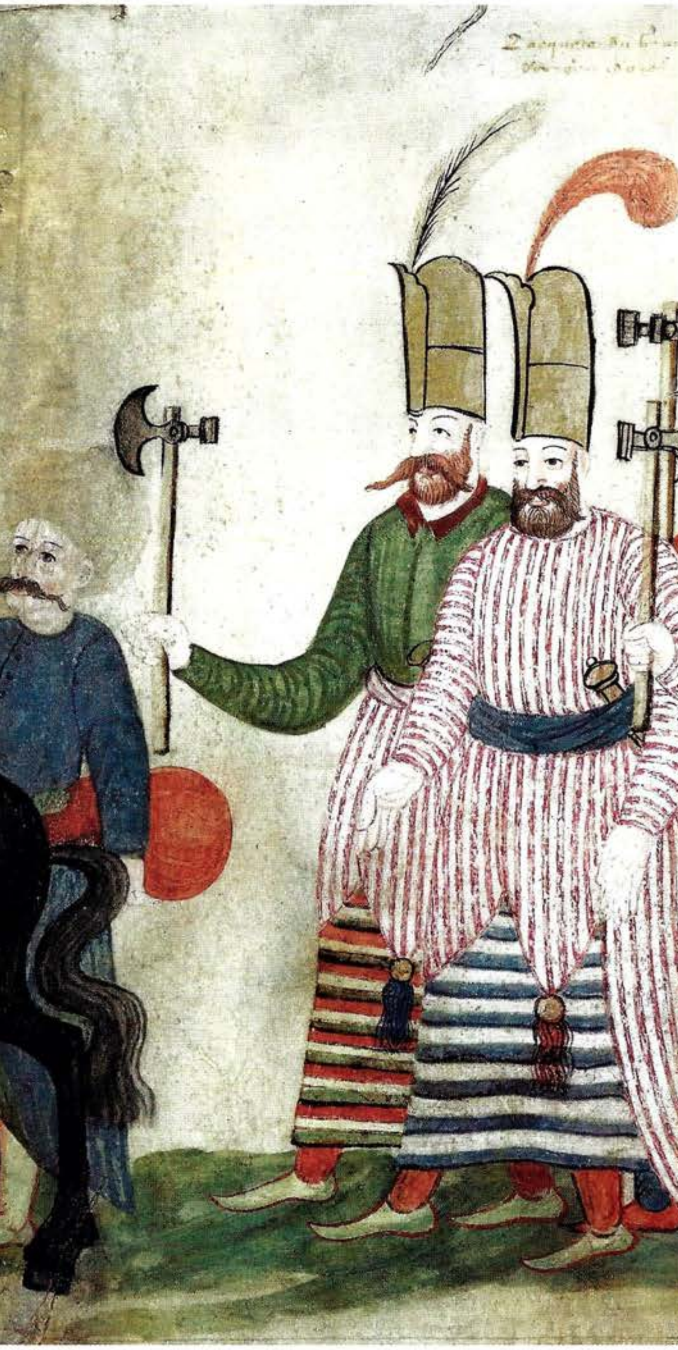
Transition to Christianity: Art of Late Antiquity, 3rd–7th century AD,
Onassis Cultural Center, 645 5th Avenue, New York, until May 14; onassisusa.org
Byzantium and Islam: Age of Transition,
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, until July 8; metmuseum.org



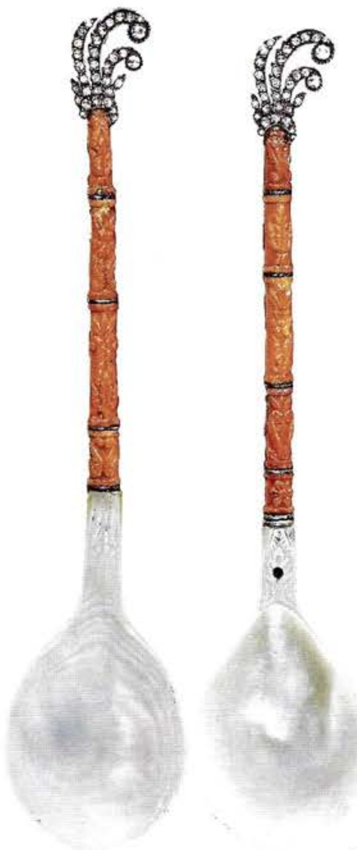
TWO BYZANTINE SILVER PLATES, 629–30, NOW IN NEW YORK. TOP 'DAVID AND GOLIATH', AT THE MET. ABOVE 'DAVID FIGHTING A BEAR', AT THE ONASSIS CENTER. BELOW 'ST MARK PREACHING': ONE OF 14 IVORY PANELS FROM ALEXANDRIA AT THE MET



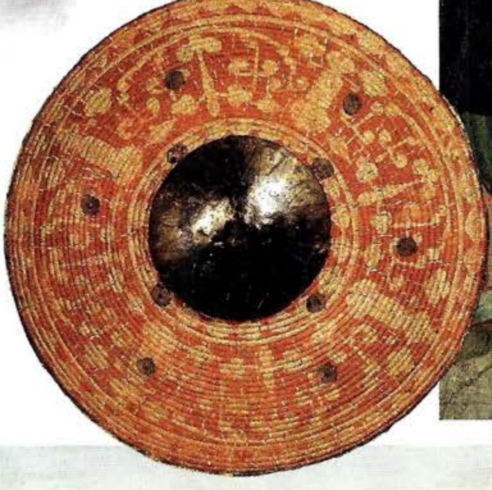
THE LONDON SALES



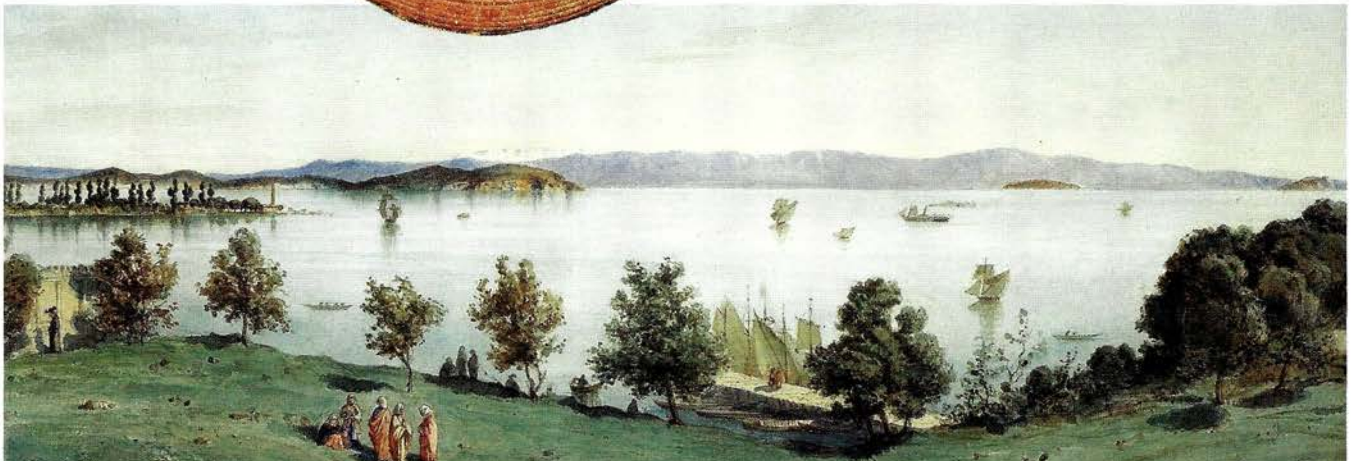
▷ This scroll fragment depicting Murad II's janissary escort – axemen (*peyk*) and archers (*solak*) – was painted on vellum, c 1600. European courts expected such manuscripts from envoys. Sotheby's Ottoman Sale, April 24 (est £40,000–60,000).



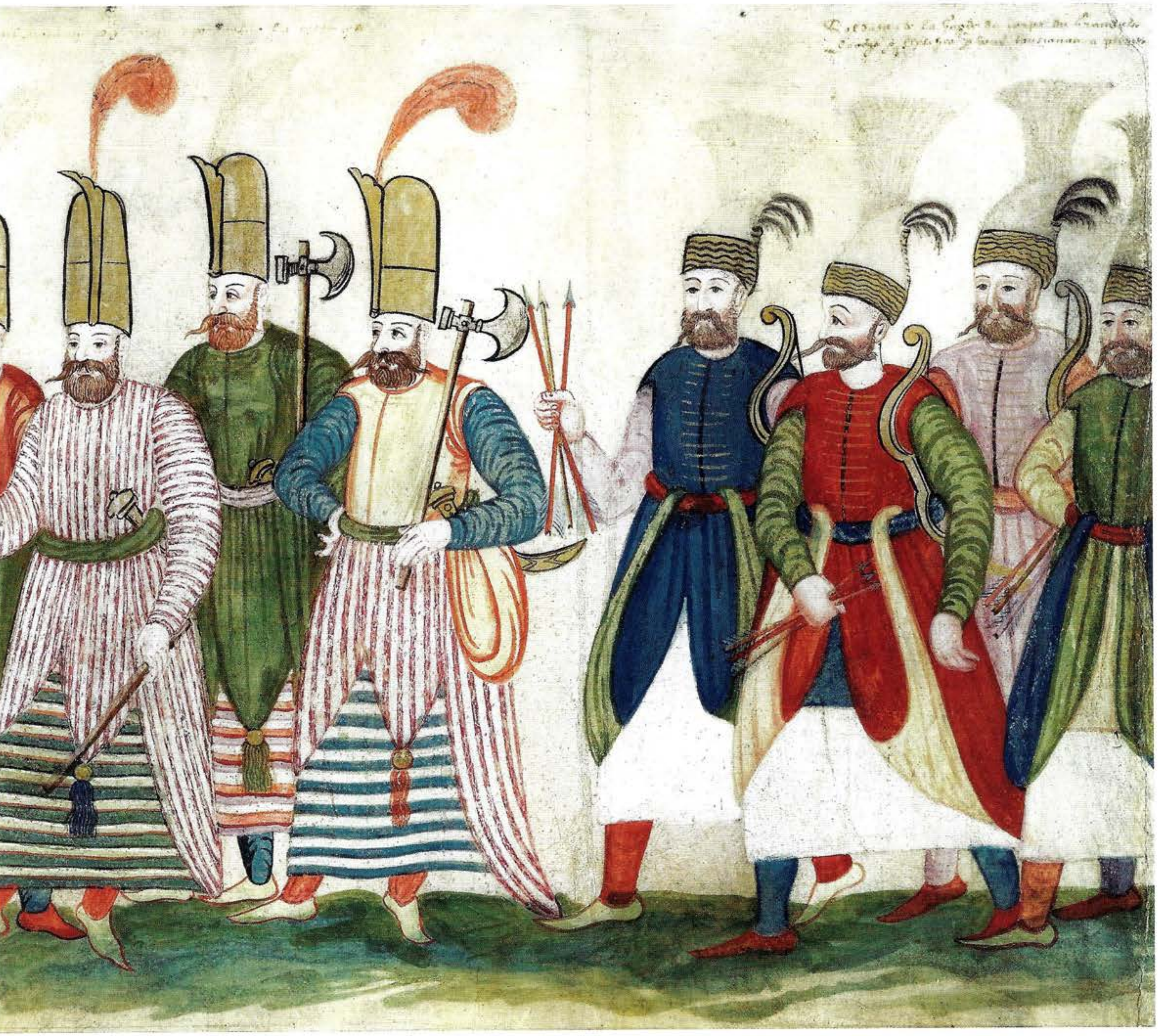
◁ Sumptuous Ottoman spoons similar to these in the Sotheby's sale can be seen in the Topkapı. Made in the 18th or 19th century, they have delicately carved mother-of-pearl bowls and coral handles and diamond-studded aigrettes as finials (est £8,000–12,000).



▽ The Ottomans still used wicker shields on campaigns in eastern Europe in the late 17th century, though they were better suited to withstand arrows than musket shot. This beautiful painted example was captured after the second Ottoman siege of Vienna in 1683 (Sotheby's, est £10,000–15,000).

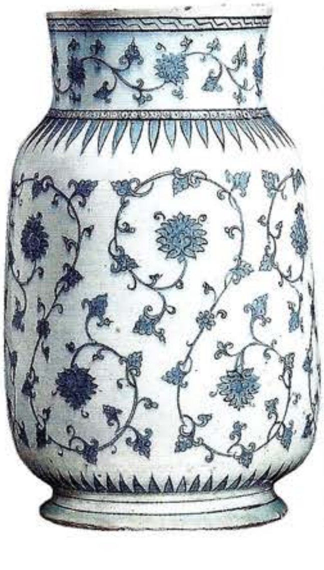


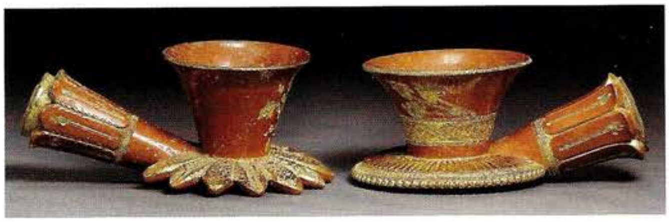
▽Salvatore Valeri (1856–1946) taught painting at an art school set up in 1883 by the Ottoman artist and statesman Osman Hamdi, which took both male and female students. This panoramic watercolour of the Princes Islands shows Moda, on the Asian shore, before it became built up (Sotheby's, est £10,000–15,000).



NEW LIGHT ON A CHINESE LANTERN

▷ This Iznik lantern jar on sale at Christie's, London, on April 26 is a particular rarity. The meandering floral design and greyish-blue colouring are strongly influenced by Chinese styles; from the early 1520s Iznik craftsmen had began to imitate Yuan and Ming porcelain. Examples of Chinese-influenced design are well known, but the form is what makes this jar so rare, with only two others known – one in a private collection in France and the other in the Met. This unique design seems likely to have come directly from earlier Chinese styles (Christie's, est £50,000–70,000).





DON'T SMOKE IN BED

△ How many boxes of dusty pottery pipe bowls lurk in attics of country houses, collected by some forgotten ancestor on a trip through the Ottoman Empire, wrapped up in a newspaper of the day, biding their time? These 19th-century 'lüle', or pipe bowls, from the Tophane district of Istanbul, where the finest bowls were sold – at one point there were some 60 pipe shops there – have the characteristic deep red clay and gilding. Three more examples in the Sotheby's sale have ebony 'chibouks', long cylindrical pipes, attached to the bowls. The smoker sat on a divan, resting the bowl in a dish on the floor as he puffed away (Sotheby's, est £3,000–5,000).

Private view

ANDREW FINKEL BEMOANS THE DEVASTATION THAT THREATENS THE EUPHRATES-TIGRIS BASIN BUT LEARNS TO LIVE WITH AN ANCIENT RIVAL FOR HIS WIFE'S AFFECTIONS

That sinking feeling

I finally paid a visit to Hasankeyf, a town on the Tigris river, towered over by the 13th- and 14th-century mosques and palaces built by the descendants of Saladin. I am not sure if I will ever see it again, or at least without a snorkel. For if the construction of the Ilısu Dam goes ahead downstream, it is destined to be submerged. That £1.1 billion undertaking is part of the vast Southeast Anatolian Project (known as GAP), a controversial effort to generate hydroelectric power for the national grid. Turkey's energy needs add to its hefty import bill, so some way of meeting the growing demand for power is badly needed.

Proponents of GAP argue that it will restore the Fertile Crescent to its former glory by developing the poor southeast of the country. Those who I met in Hasankeyf imply that Ilısu will simply put the "mess" back into Mesopotamia. The last thing they want is to see their way of life submerged. "We're not goats. We don't want to live there," one man told me, pointing to the highrises being built up on the hillside above.

The issue seemed to boil down to this: Ilısu will provide 3,800 gigawatt hours of electricity per year, or about 2 percent of the country's current needs. Against that has to be weighed the irreversible damage that would be caused to the unique ecosystem and cultural sites of the region – and, of course, the arrogance of expecting people to move from their homes.

Many of the arguments against the project once struck me as a form of vicarious Nimbyism. Might the pundits and the activists in faraway Istanbul be overlooking the good projects that GAP supports and downplaying their benefits in the name of environmental political correctness?

Now I regret sitting on the fence for so long. What has convinced me that the Ilısu Dam is a terrible idea is not the splendour I encountered visiting Hasankeyf so much as the new shopping malls and half-constructed apartment skyscrapers lining the highway from the airport in Istanbul that I passed on my way home. They are what is gobbling up the country's electricity and destroying the Tigris basin. Most of Ilısu's electricity will flow west, far from where it is generated. A far better project would be to reduce waste on the national electricity grid. This runs at up to 18 percent, and experts say it could be cut by half. Yet it may be too late to stop the flood. Up to 600 sites are threatened by the Ilısu Dam, including Gre Amer, where evidence of Neolithic civilisations is coded in chips of rock and bits of clay – adobe secrets that will soon revert to mud.

Travelling hopefully

I understand exactly what Diana, Princess of Wales, meant when she complained of there being "three of us" in her marriage. My rival was born 400 years ago and spent much of his life on a horse. His name is Evliya Çelebi and I simply can't compete. For a start, he was more productive than I, or indeed most people, could hope to be. Once he hit the road in 1640, he never stopped. The accounts of his journeys run to 10 volumes in the recent Turkish edition. He is Marco Polo and Samuel Pepys rolled into one; a Muslim Montaigne, an Ottoman Herodotus.

Through his eyes we witness a dental operation at the Hapsburg court; risqué shenanigans in a bathhouse in Bursa, Turkey; torture in Safavid Iran; and the Parthenon in all its 1668 glory – 20 years before Francesco Morosini's cannonball hit an ammunition dump inside the temple and blew it to smithereens. Evliya fends off brigands in the forests of deepest Anatolia and leads the call to prayer after the Ottoman conquest of Crete. Above all, he is the historian of the common people and offers a unique first-hand account of everyday life at the peak of the Ottoman Empire.

So while my historian wife, Caroline, is happy to leave home without me, she'll never leave without Evliya. The other day she set out to re-create the first stages of his 1671 pilgrimage to Mecca. With a group of like-minded enthusiasts, including botanists and cultural historians, she rode in his hoofprints for 40 days. They wound their way inland from a spot across the Gulf of Izmit near Istanbul, down the west of Turkey toward Kütahya, Evliya's ancestral home. In so doing they carved out what has now been dubbed the Evliya Çelebi Way, Turkey's 13th official cultural route and the only such trek documented for both riders and hikers, with GPS co-ordinates and detailed descriptions. The route winds through settlements and along paths that have remained largely unchanged since antiquity.

Exploring this landscape through Evliya's eyes is not just a game of historical make-believe but a way of preserving it for the future. Hikers stay in tents or rural homes, not in concrete towers. So they provide an income for the villages through which they pass, encouraging the natural custodians of the countryside to stay on the land.

Backpacking or riding horses through riverbeds isn't everyone's idea of a restful holiday. But with Evliya at one's side it's easier to remember that the journey is often more interesting than the destination. And even I can get used to the idea of that ménage à trois. ◆

Some of this material was first published in the international edition of The New York Times: http://latitude.blogs.nytimes.com/author/andrew-finkel

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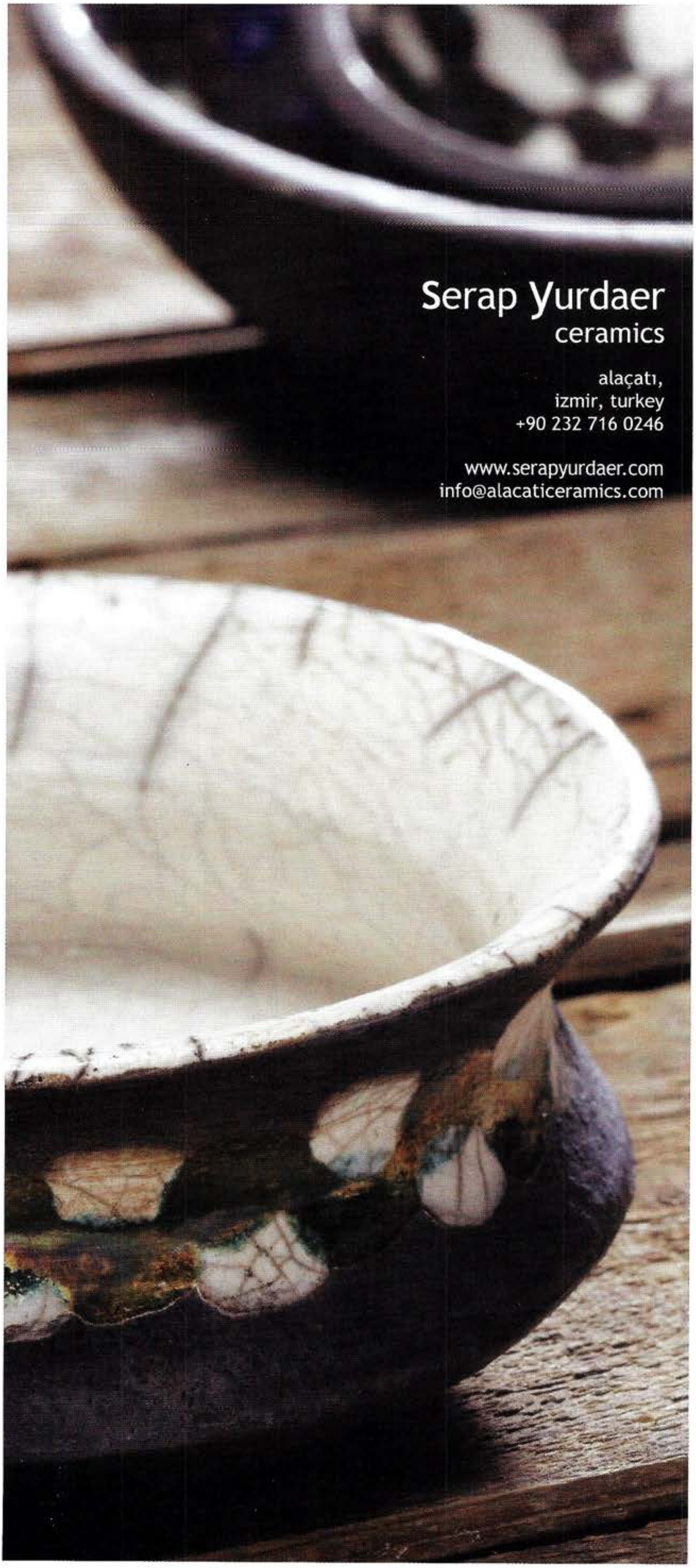

BOSPHORUS BOOM

By Michael Hornsby

The market for Turkish art at home and abroad continues to attract attention, with good reason. An auction in Istanbul in March set a new record for a piece of contemporary Turkish art – a canvas by Erol Akyavaş fetched over $1 million – while two big sales in London and Dubai in April show a consistent international interest. This boom has been accompanied by a steady rise in the quality of exhibitions in Istanbul.

During her time as director of the Sakıp Sabancı Museum (SSM), which is 10 years old this year, and her 25 at the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Arts, Nazan Ölçer has presided over exhibitions on personalities as diverse as Genghis Khan and Picasso. They have consistently been major events in Istanbul's arts calendar. Her current blockbuster is *Rembrandt and His Contemporaries*.

If Nazan Hanım has a buzzword, it is "exchange" – between cultures, periods and genres. In May, the SSM's collection of Islamic calligraphy will be put back on public view. She promises that it will be jaw-dropping. While I was there, Kutluğ Ataman, the celebrated video artist, telephoned for a chat about his involvement. A Monet exhibition in autumn 2012 will complement the Turkish impressionist paintings in the museum's collection, exhibited under the name *While a Country Is Changing*. No doubt it will be another spectacular.

The show drawing the crowds at the moment is *Van Gogh Alive: The Experience*, at Antrepo 3 (the warehouse next to Istanbul Modern), essentially a dark, empty room with fast-moving images and surround-sound classical music. It isn't exactly high art, but hopefully such exhibitions will spark an interest that benefits quality institutions.

In April the Pera Museum will open *Goya: Witness of His Time*, which follows close on the heels of its beautiful initiation of the Dutch Year – *Sultans, Merchants and Painters*, now in Amsterdam (see page 70) – and the second part of its exhibition of historical photographs of the Bosphorus, *From Konstantiniyye to Istanbul*.

Two major contemporary art institutions, Istanbul Modern and SALT, are participating in the Dutch–Turkish celebrations with visiting collections from Rotterdam and Eindhoven respectively. Istanbul Modern's *La La La Human Steps* is mostly made up of video art from the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen. The works somehow seem to get straight to the core of the human experience, without over-intellectualising.

SALT, meanwhile, is more the thinking person's institution. Its new space in the former Ottoman Bank building, SALT Galata, which opened in November, has the feel of a college campus for discerning grown-ups. There is exhibition space, a library, an open archive and an excellent restaurant. SALT's partnership with the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven continues all year. The first of three shows featured Gabriel Orozco, Marlene Dumas and Mike Kelley, to name but a few. A collaboration with Tate Modern, *I Decided Not to Save the World*, is at the original gallery, SALT Beyoğlu, until May 20.

Until May 27 Arter is hosting Mona Hatoum, with her delicate balance of provocation and humour, layered meaning and aesthetic form. Mathieu Paley's stunning photographs from his extensive travels in Central Asia are at the French Cultural Centre until May 9.

Back in November, the annual mega-fair Contemporary Istanbul was impressively international, with galleries from 20 countries. A great commercial showcase for home-grown talent, it is also a gathering of an art-loving society eager to talk to the rest of the world. ◆

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SHE WAS BORN TO BE A NEW YORK SOCIETY BEAUTY, BUT THE LATE JOSEPHINE POWELL'S CHOSEN WORLD WAS THAT OF THE ANATOLIAN NOMAD. FIVE YEARS AFTER HER DEATH, HER ARCHIVE OF PHOTOGRAPHS RECORDING OLD ANATOLIA IN ALL ITS GLORY WILL SEE THE LIGHT OF DAY IN ISTANBUL. BY ANDREW FINKEL

A NOMAD AMONG NOMADS

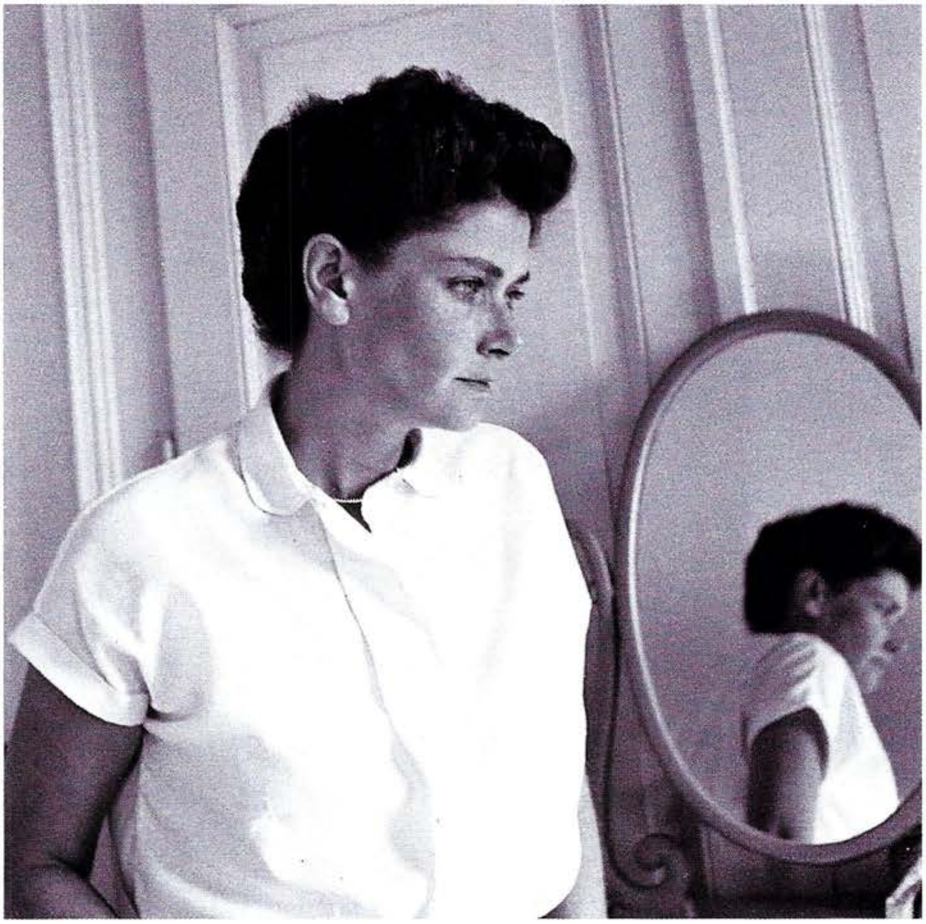
Josephine Powell wasn't like other people. She did things most of us wouldn't do, went to places most of us will never visit, and saw things most of us would overlook. These attributes, along with a profound respect for nomadic peoples acquired during her work with the UN's International Refugee Organisation after the war, influenced her to become one of the great ethnographic photographers of Anatolia and the Near East.

Josephine was equally famous as a collector of flat weaves and cultural objects and spent the latter part of her life trying to penetrate the aesthetic of the women whose handicrafts she so admired. Her early photographs were crisp black and white images of the Islamic architecture of Iran and Afghanistan and the peoples she encountered there, commissioned by publishers of then newly fashionable coffee-table books and art-historical tomes.

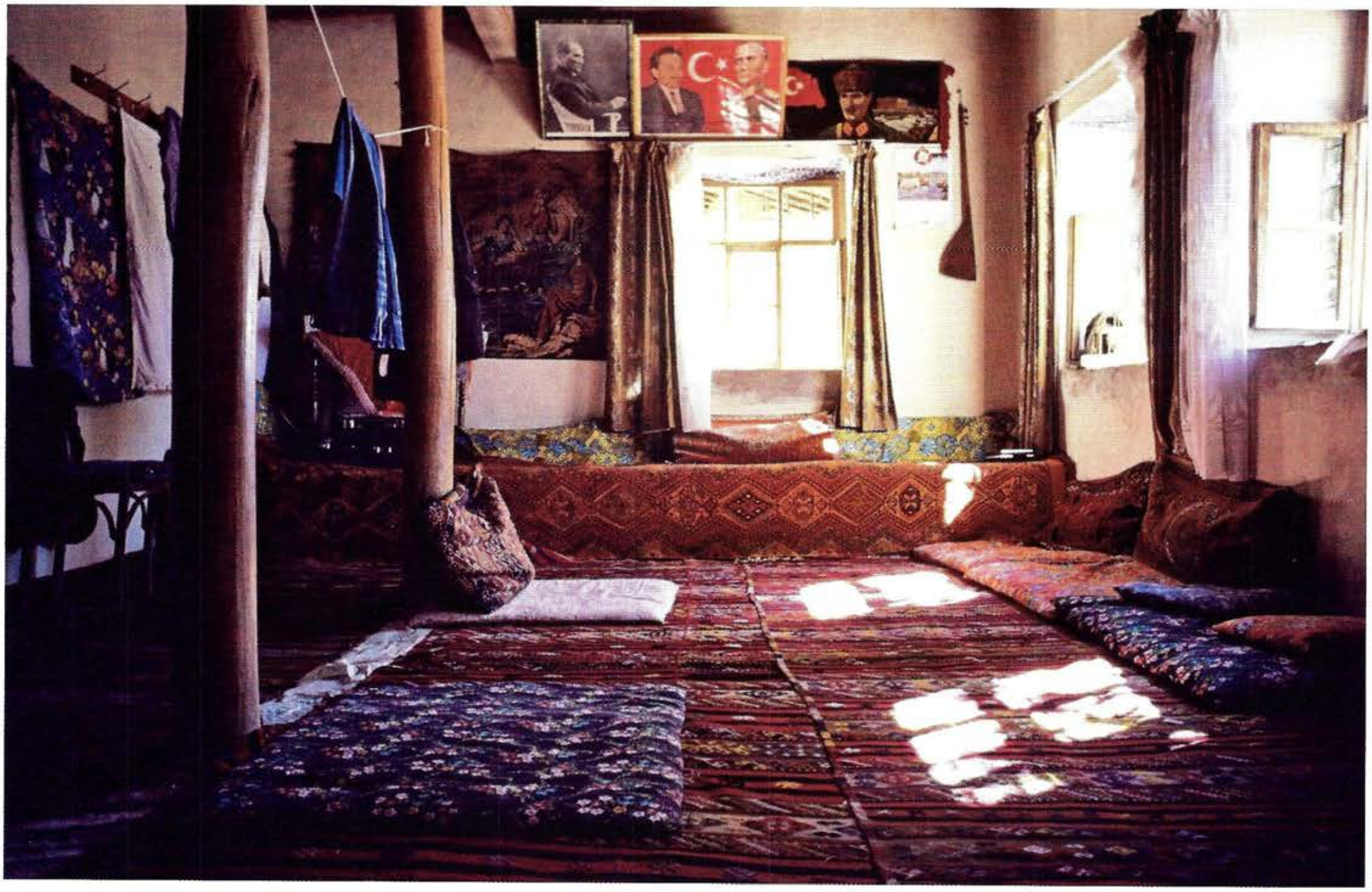
Her pictures of Anatolia, however, are less self-conscious in their composition, capturing fleeting moments both in the lives they depict and of Josephine herself asking the question "why?". She was undoubtedly a sort of Canute, trying to halt the tide of modernity she saw eroding the dignity of the nomads whose itinerant existence she emulated.

Josephine entrusted her collection of kilims and nomadic artefacts and thousands of slides to the Vehbi Koç Foundation, and it is fitting that her photos form the opening exhibition in the gallery of RCAC, Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations. Although she spent years archiving her transparencies, those images today have a faded, dusty feel. Reprinted for the exhibition, they are a revelation. The colour and depth she so admired in the work of nomadic women are present in her own art.

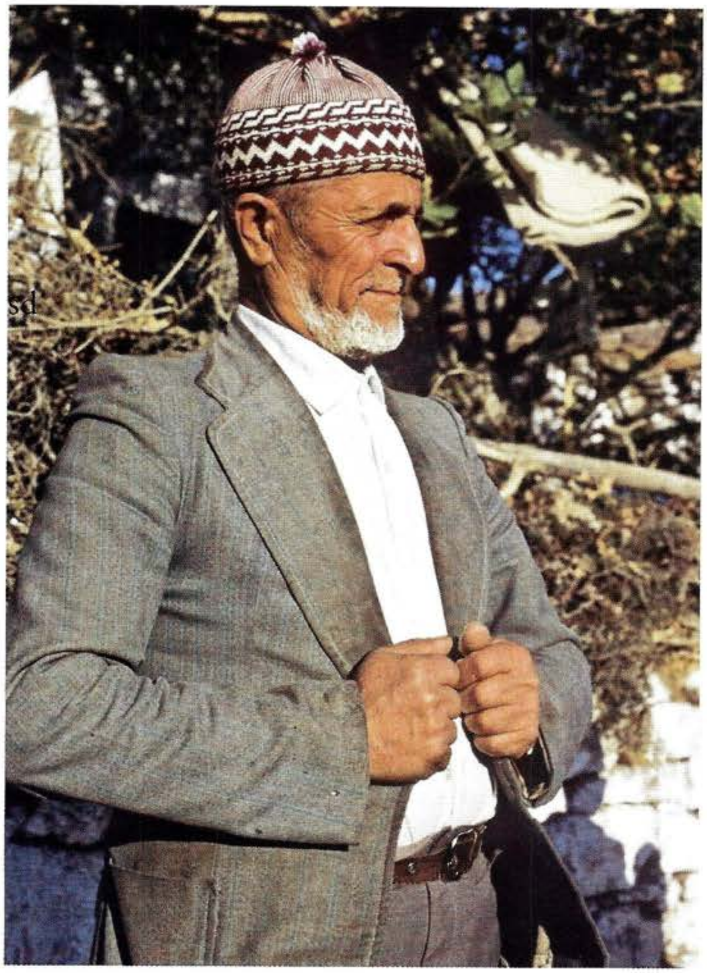
Distilling the vast archive down to manageable size was a Herculean task. The exhibition's curator, Kimberly Hart, has concentrated on the way Josephine looked at people. Hart is an anthropologist who has done research at the DOBAG women's carpet co-operative in Western Anatolia, which Josephine helped to found. "This exhibition," says Hart, "is her vision of Anatolia." Its fitting title is *What Josephine Saw*, and all the photographs in this article are from the show.

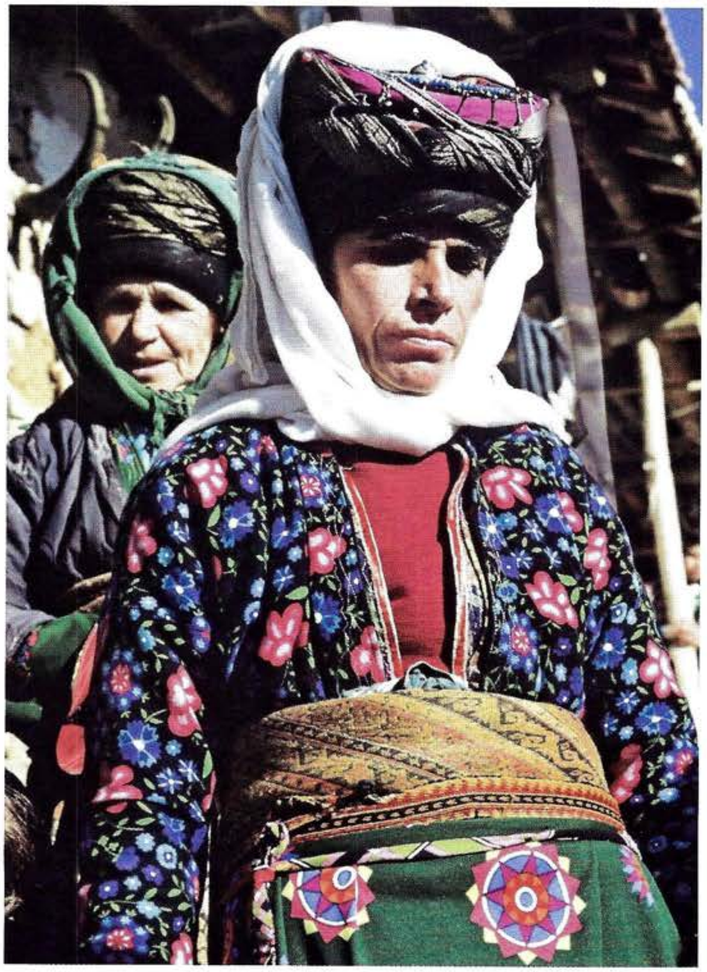


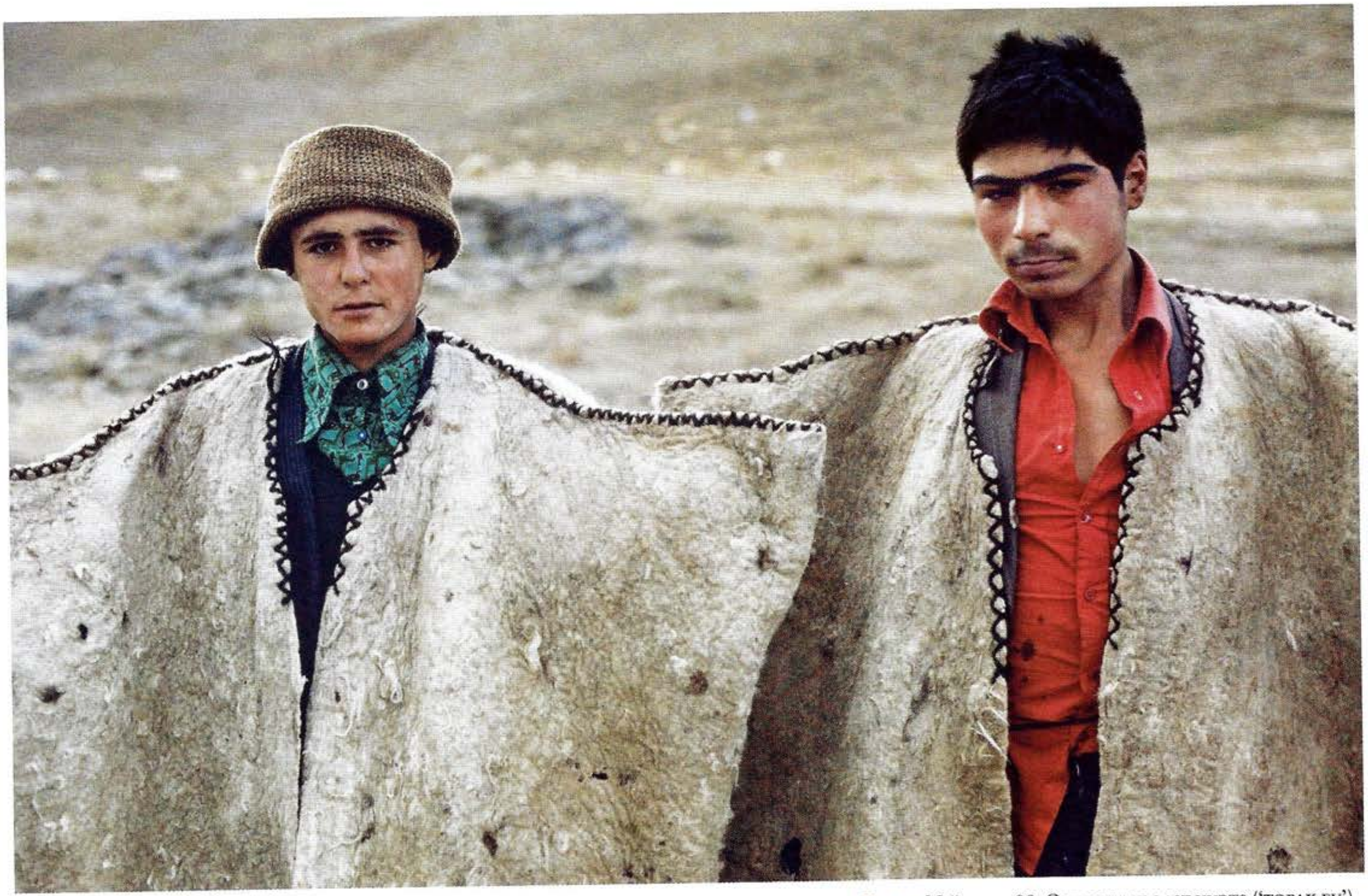
ABOVE JOSEPHINE POWELL IN POST-WAR GERMANY. SELF-TAUGHT AS A PHOTOGRAPHER, TEXTILE EXPERT, TRAVELLER AND ETHNOGRAPHER, SHE HAD BEEN BORN IN MANHATTAN IN 1919, ORPHANED AT A YOUNG AGE AND LEFT NEW YORK IN 1946 TO HELP RESETTLE WAR REFUGEES IN EUROPE
LEFT WHEN SHE WAS NOT SEEKING OUT ANATOLIAN NOMADS OR REMOTE MEDIEVAL MONUMENTS IN AFGHANISTAN, ISTANBUL WAS HOME. HERE SHE SORTS SLIDES AT HOME IN CIHANGIR IN 2005
RIGHT ONE OF THE EXTRAORDINARILY INTIMATE PORTRAITS OF NOMADS IN THE EXHIBITION. TAKEN IN SÜLEYMANKÖY, AYVACIK, IN 1985, IT SHOWS A NEWLY MARRIED WOMAN DISPLAYING HER GOLD JEWELLERY AND HENNAED HANDS



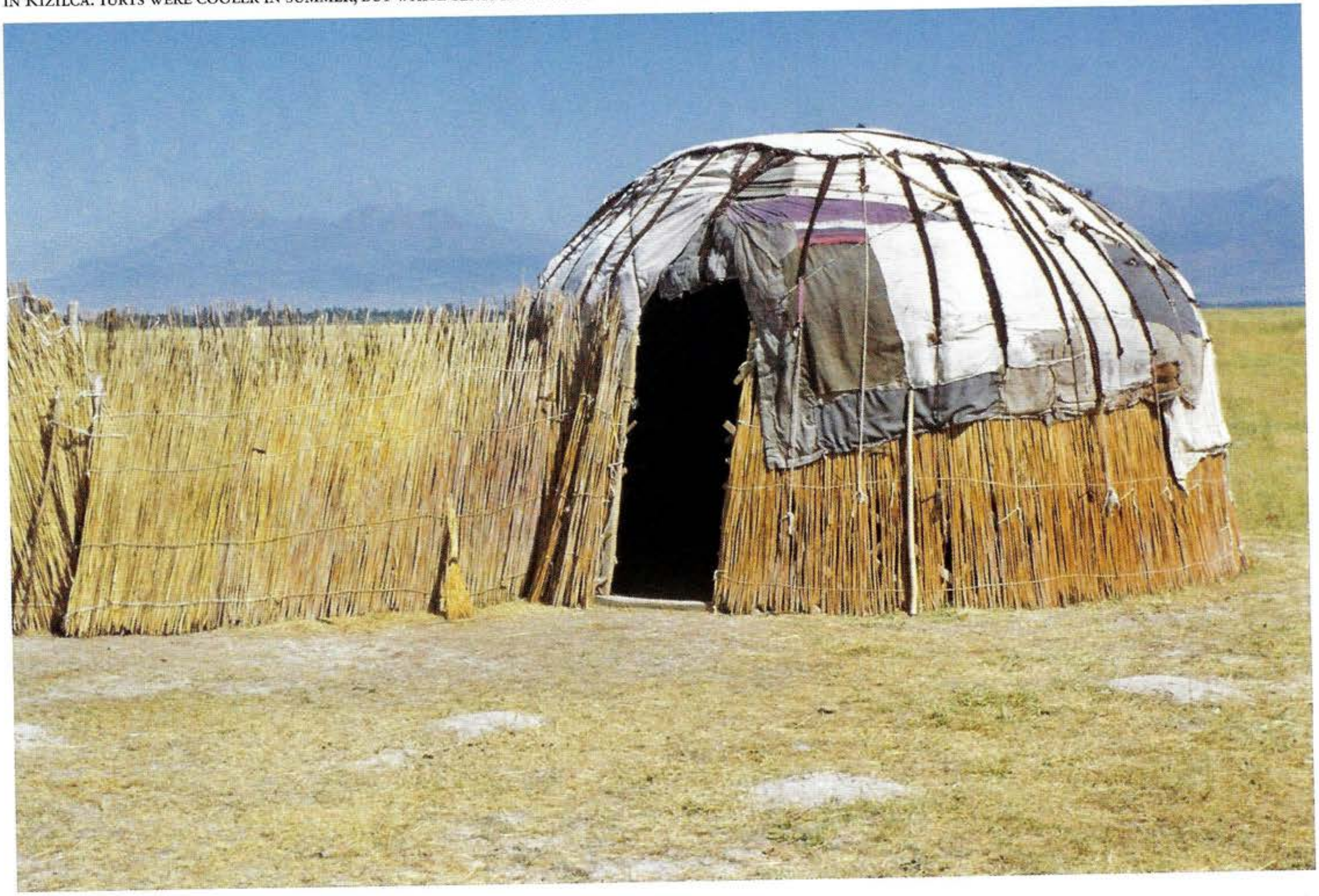
Above Malatya, 1970. Wall-to-wall kilims and national heroes in a landowner's house in Gölpinar Below left Manisa, 1985. Ali Acarkoç, the Aegean village headman instrumental in setting up the Dobag weaving project on Yuntdağ Below Adiyaman, 1980. Women display their headdresses

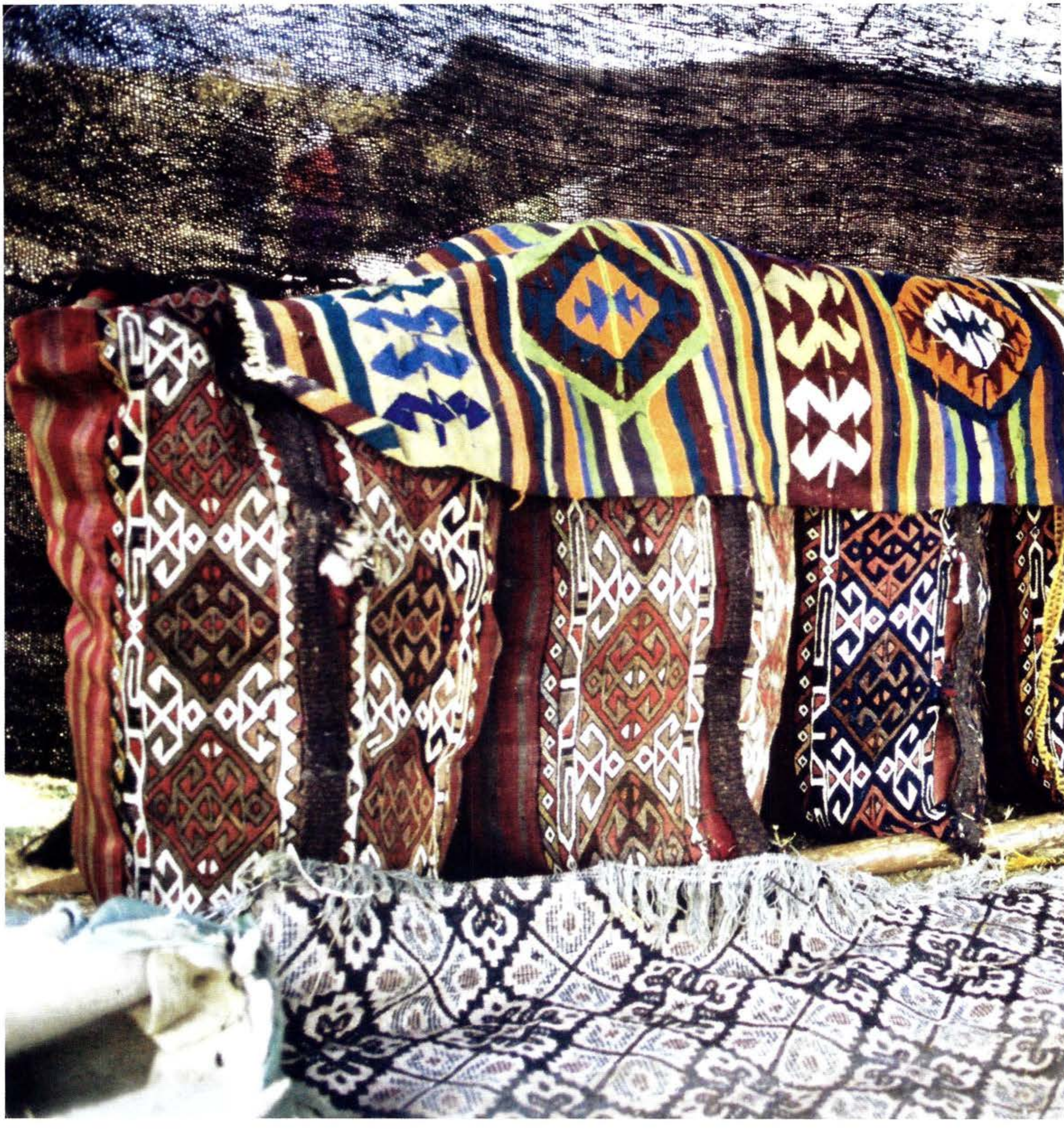




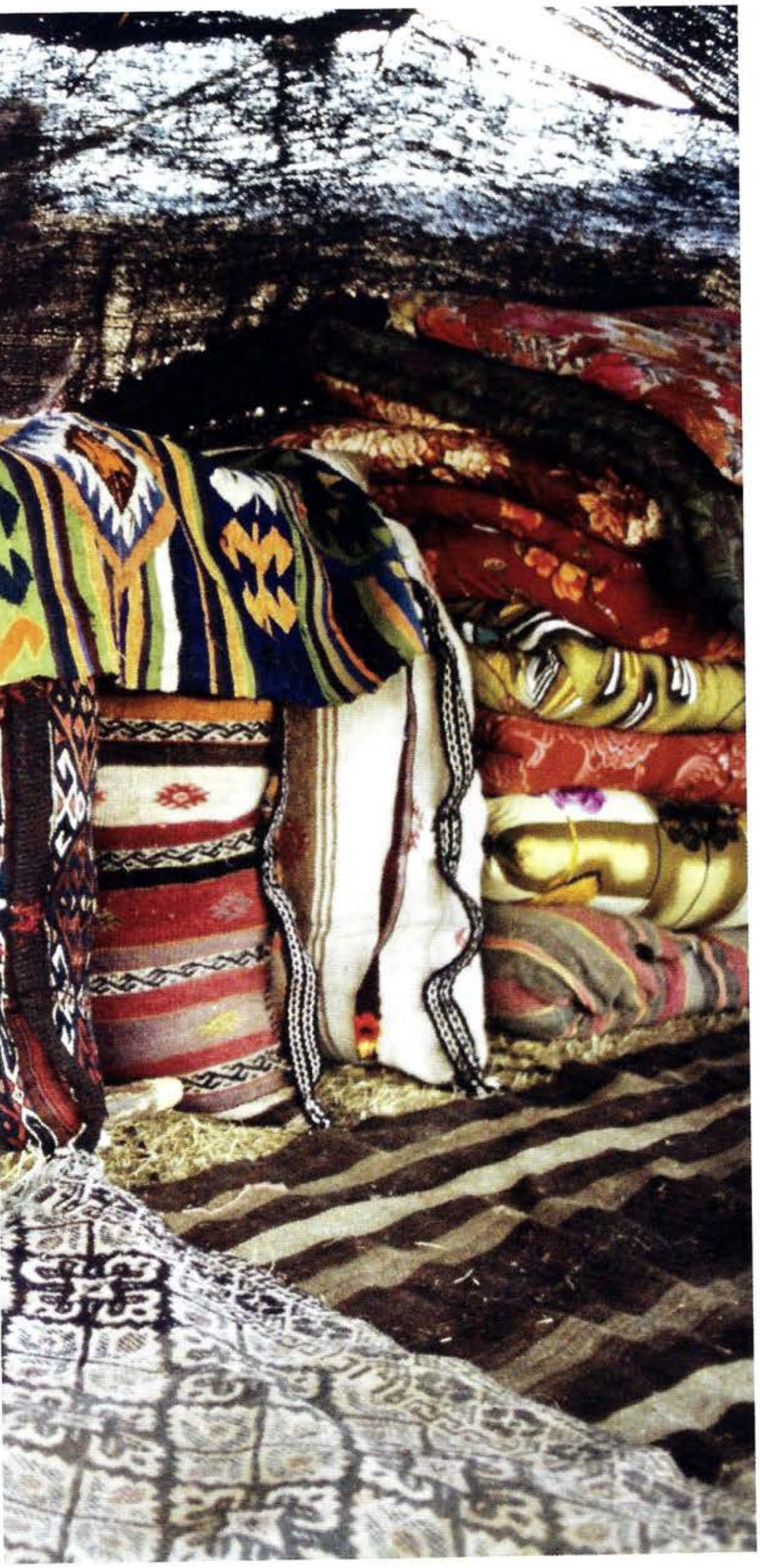


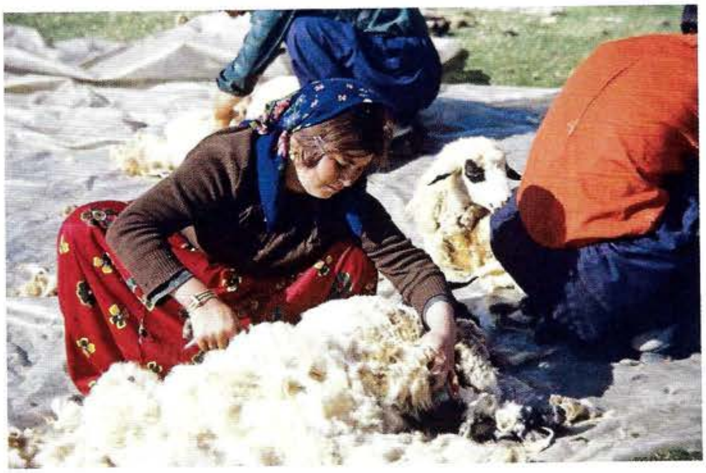
Above Honamli shepherds, 1982. These young nomads wear the traditional wide felt cape Below Niğde, 1988. One of the last yurts ('topak ev') in Kizilca. Yurts were cooler in summer, but white tents had largely replaced them as wives had forgotten the skills needed to put them together

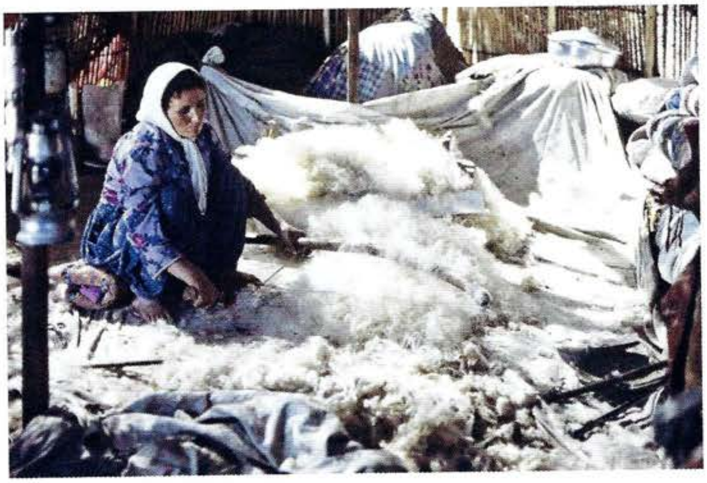


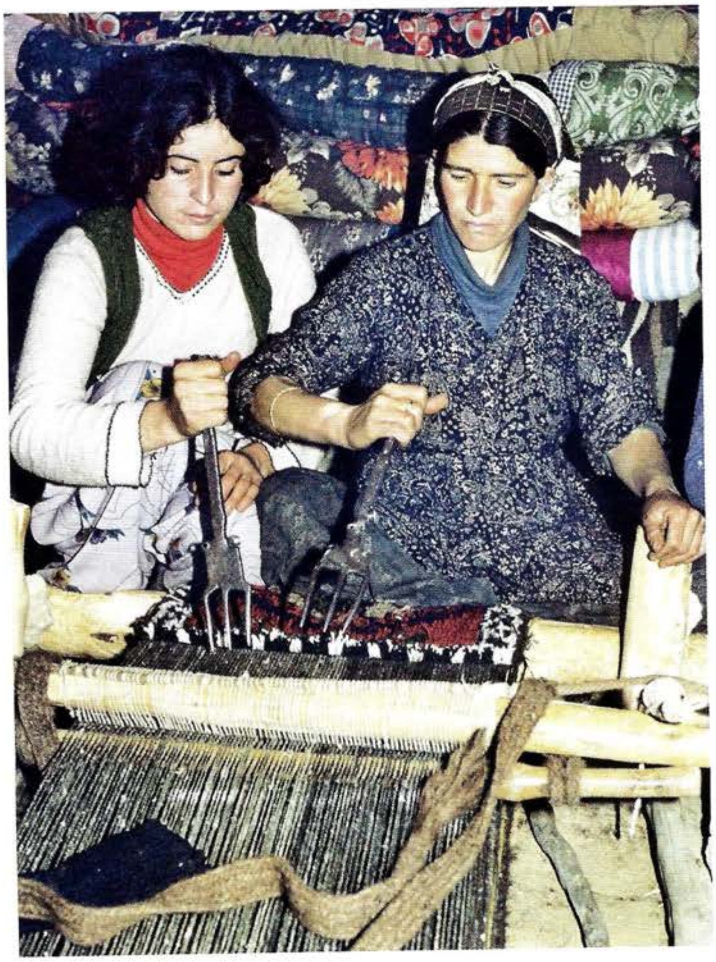


'The colour and depth that Josephine Powell so admired in the work of nomadic women ar



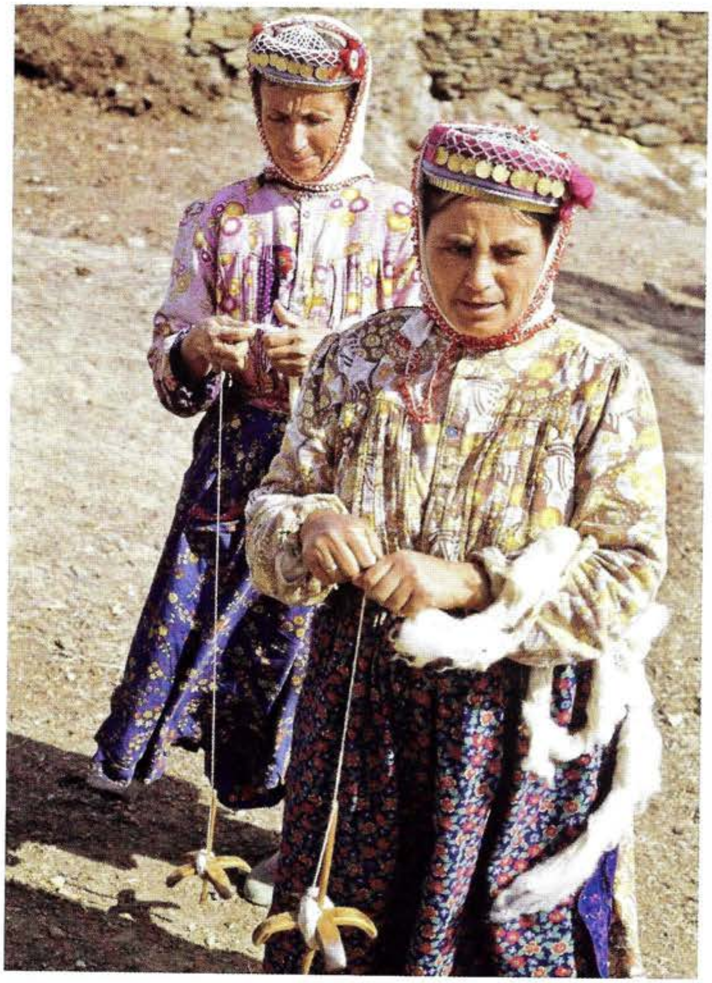


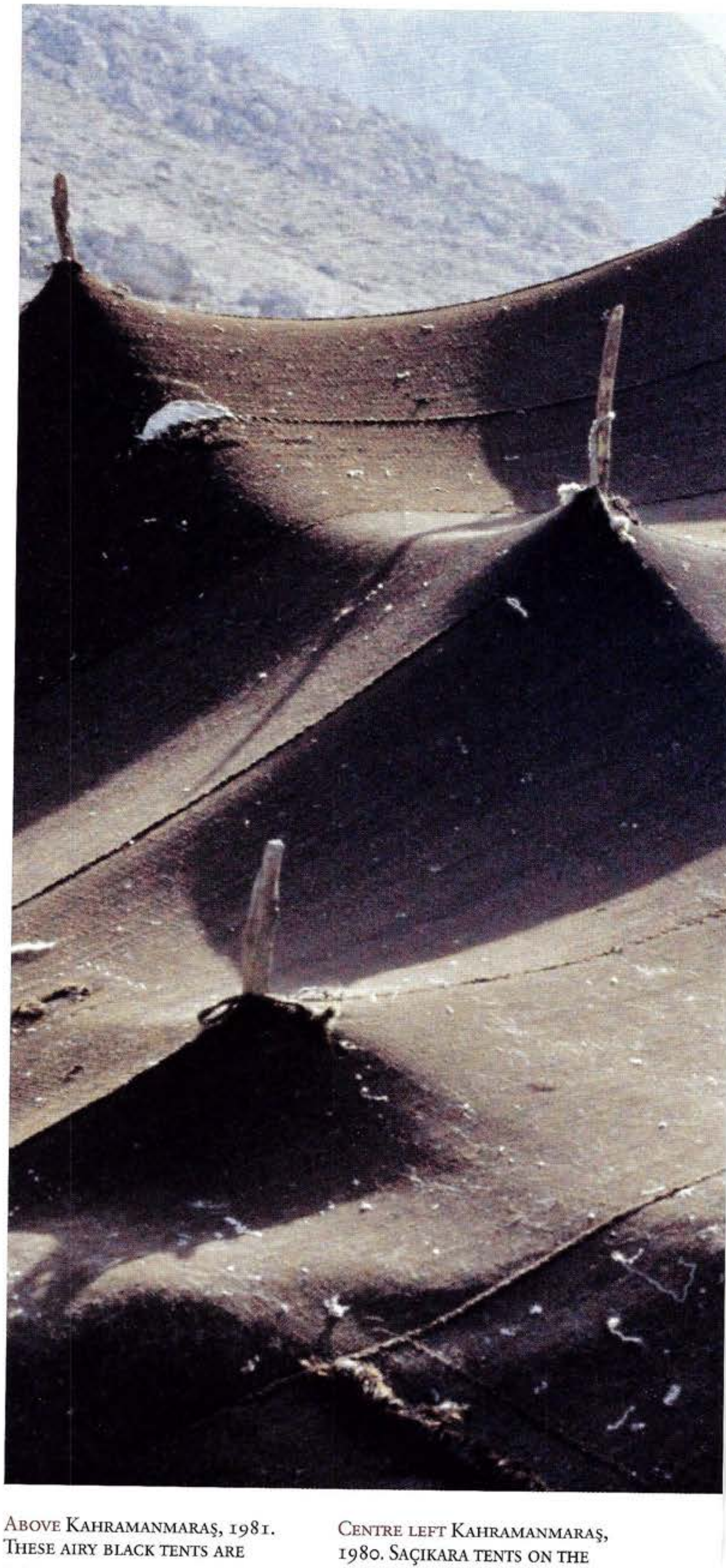


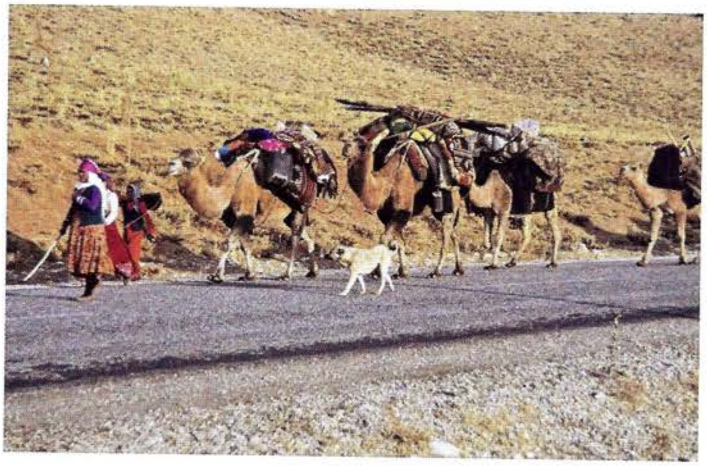


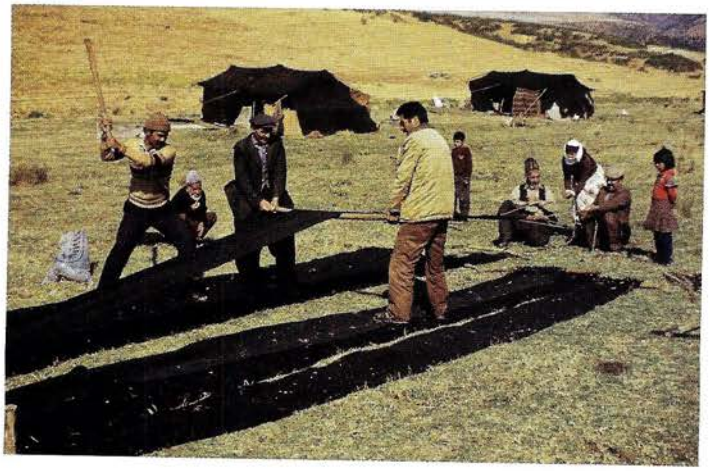
resent in her own art'

ABOVE MARAŞ, 1980. LIGHT FILTERS THROUGH A BLACK TENT ONTO A ROW OF SACKS COVERED BY A KILIM
TOP RIGHT KAYSERI, 1978. A GIRL OF THE SAÇIKARA TRIBE SHEARING LAMBS
CENTRE ADANA, 1978. A WOMAN NEAR SAIMBEYLI USES A BOW ('YAY') TO PREPARE WOOL FOR A MATTRESS
RIGHT KAHRAMANMARAŞ, 1981. A WOMAN ON THE YUNALAN YAYLA SHOWS A DAUGHTER HOW TO WEAVE A KNOTTED SADDLEBAG ('HEYBE') WITH AN IMPRESSIVE FORK TO PACK THE KNOTS









ABOVE KAHRAMANMARAŞ, 1981. THESE AIRY BLACK TENTS ARE BETTER THAN THE CIRCULAR ONES IN THE ARID HEAT OF SOUTHEAST ANATOLIA. THIS ONE ON MOUNT ENGIZEK HAS STONE WALLS
TOP LEFT UŞAK, 1978. WOMEN WEARING STRIKING HEADDRESSES SPIN WOOL USING DROP SPINDLES IN THE WESTERN ANATOLIAN VILLAGE OF TOKMAK

CENTRE LEFT KAHRAMANMARAŞ, 1980. SAÇIKARA TENTS ON THE MOVE NORTH OF GÖKSÜN. EVEN TODAY THE TRIBE IS STILL NOMADIC
LEFT KONYA, 1980. SUPERVISED BY WOMEN, FRIENDS HELP A SAÇIKARA MAN TO MAKE A TENT. JOSEPHINE NOTES HOW THEY STRETCH SEVEN PANELS OF MATERIAL TO THE SAME LENGTH, THEN SEW THEM TOGETHER WITH THREE-PLY GOAT YARN

'She was a sort of Canute, trying to halt the tide of modernity she saw eroding the nomad's dignity'

EXHIBITION NOTES

WHAT JOSEPHINE SAW: TWENTIETH CENTURY PHOTOGRAPHIC VISIONS OF RURAL ANATOLIA

The Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, Merkez Han, İstiklâl Cd 181, Beyoğlu, Istanbul, from June 11, 2012. www.rcac.ku.edu.tr.

The catalogue (available from cornucopia.net) includes articles by the curator, Kimberly Hart, on Josephine Powell's Anatolian photographs in the Koç University archives, and by Jeff Spurr on her earlier black and white photographs, now in the Fine Arts Library, Harvard. The catalogue also features an interview with Josephine Powell by Andrew Finkel, who wrote an article about her, 'American Nomad', for CORNUCOPIA 29

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BOOKS

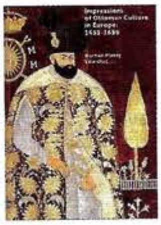
THE OTTOMAN HOLD ON EUROPE, NEW LIFE FOR A BEYLIK BEAUTY, A VICTORIAN VINDICATED, AND A TURKISH MOGUL IN MANHATTAN. PLUS THE INCOMPARABLE PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR

EUROPE A LA TURQUE

Tim Stanley

IMPRESSIONS OF OTTOMAN CULTURE IN EUROPE 1453–1699

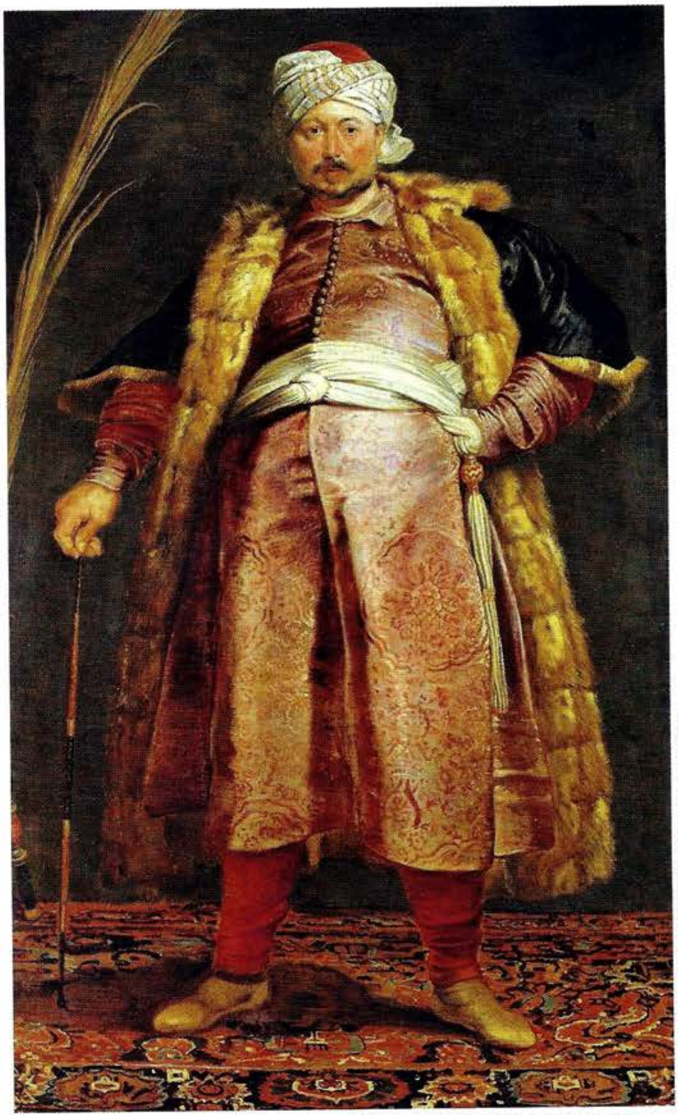
Nurhan Atasoy and Lâle Uluç
Armaggan Publications £100



This book is an impressive encyclopedia of the ways in which Ottoman material culture is reflected in the objects and images produced in the parts of Europe that did not fall under direct Ottoman control. The period it covers runs from the conquest of Constantinople by Mehmet II in 1453 to the end of the War of the Holy League in 1699, when Ottoman military expansion on its European frontiers ceased for good, and the Europeans lost their awe of the Ottomans.

The book's impact is vivid and immediate thanks to its 400 colour illustrations of high quality. These would be a useful resource if the authors had merely brought together what was already known, but they are a good deal better than that. Nurhan Atasoy's voyages of discovery in Europe are already known to us through *İpek*, the superb survey of Ottoman silk textiles she led to publication in 2001. Now they have delivered another swathe of material, much of it new, and, for me at least, exciting. Lâle Uluç's contribution is also very evident. As in her work on Shirazi painting in Turkish collections, she has helped bring order and argument to an enormous body of material.

In the 250 years the book surveys, a variety of European attitudes developed. The cover shows a detail of a piece of red velvet embroidered and worked in appliqué with the funerary portrait of Ieremia Movila, ruler of Moldavia, who died in 1606; it comes from his tomb in the monastery of Sucevita, of which he was a founder. Ieremia wears a boldly patterned Ottoman kaftan over a robe of real *seraser*, or cloth of silver, and is shown flanked by cypress trees growing in beds of tulips and carnations. The Latin-style arms remind us that he was a Polish as well as an Ottoman vassal. But hybrid as this portrait may be, the use of Ottoman elements reflects the everyday reality of Ieremia's relations with his Turkish suzerains. It all makes sense.



THE DUTCH MERCHANT NICOLAS DE RESPAIGNE, BY RUBENS, C1630

GEMÄLDEGALERIE ALTE MEISTER, MUSEUMSLANDSCHAFT HESSEN KASSEL

A very different impression is left by a dramatic portrait of the Dutch merchant Nicolas de Respaigne, painted after he returned home from Venice, where we assume he was engaged in trade with the Ottomans. Here we enter the world of high art, for the portrait is by Peter Paul Rubens. Unlike Ieremia Movila, de Respaigne had no regular, direct relationship with the Ottoman authorities. There is no sense of serious intent, of power being exerted. It is a bourgeois exercise in fancy dress, a display of wealth and a certain sophistication cobbled together by someone with access to carpets and felt caps. Sitter and artist show no real sign of understanding the Ottomans, or caring. They simply thought Ottoman things were pretty.

One image in the book, a rare snap rather than a professional photograph, has a special relevance for me. In 1989, I took an opera tour to Bulgaria. It was a disaster. Balkanturist were so desperate for Western currency that they lied about everything – not a single opera was performed in any house in Bulgaria while we were there, and we had to watch terrible ballets. Even more upsetting were the noises coming from the radio in my hotel room, with the dictator Todor Zhivkov ranting about *istoricheskite fakti* – the very falsehoods he used to justify forcing the Turks in Bulgaria to adopt Christian names. And my best friend in Bulgaria was annoyed with me because I had not thought to bring her a copy of *The Satanic Verses*, which was banned there. But the tour included a visit to the Rila Monastery, high in the mountains, and in the museum there I saw an altar frontal made of Ottoman velvet of an early date. I was able to tell Nurhan about it later, when she began her search for Ottoman textiles in Europe. The illustration of one of the frontals from Rila in this book is the only positive outcome of my terrible trip.

Tim Stanley is senior curator for the Middle East at the Victoria and Albert Museum

BEAUTY IN THE BYWAYS

Scott Redford

BALAT İLYAS BEY COMPLEX

Eds M Baha Tanman and Leyla Kayhan Elbirlik
Söktaş, £70

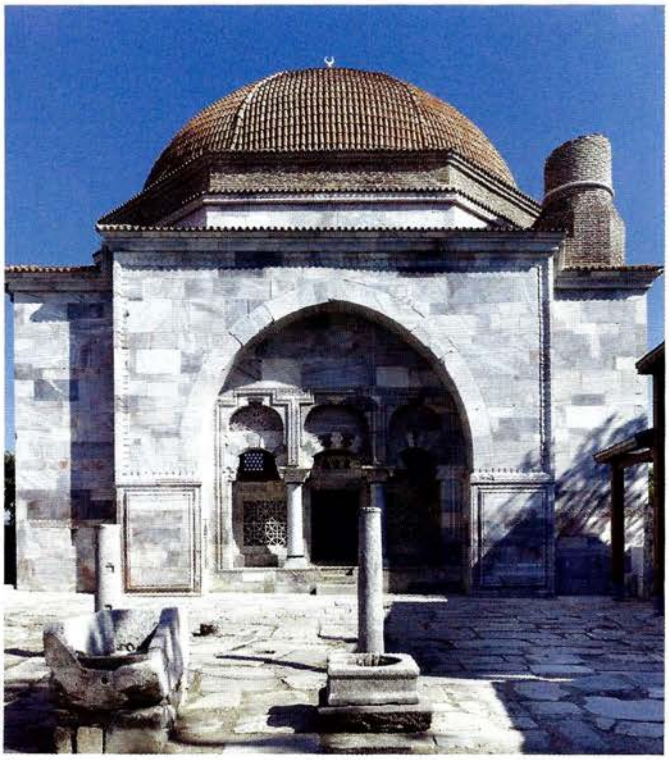
Who gives a lick about the Beylik period? Whose bailiwick is the Beylik? In the streamlined version of history fed us by tour guides, the first Turco–Islamic state in Anatolia is the Seljuk sultanate, followed by the Ottoman Empire. But there is a real pleasure to exploring those states who weren't "first" or who didn't go on to found "world empires". Following the byways of medieval Anatolian history leads us to wonderful dead ends, places of "what if?"; places and buildings whose high artistic qualities demand to be savoured on their own, without a historical trajectory necessarily giving them importance. The architecture of the period that is neither Seljuk nor Ottoman is one of these.

The term Beylik is a lumpy catch-all, standing for all of those states which sprang up during and after the long, slow decline of the Seljuk sultanate in the late 13th century and were swallowed up by the Ottomans as they expanded in Anatolia in the 14th and 15th centuries. When Byzantine frontiers in Anatolia crumbled in the latter half of the 13th century, emirates (*beylik*) were established up and down the Aegean coast. The mosques, medreses and palaces of places like Aya Soluk (Selçuk), Milas, Birgi, Peçin and Manisa introduce us to the fascinating world of 14th- and early-15th-century Turco–Islamic architecture with an Aegean slant, with architects from Mamluk Syria and Egypt, Venetians and Türkmen living side by side, and Crusader castles built in Bodrum and Izmir. It is a fascinating mixture of regional, historical and international styles: imagine Venetian Gothic profiles and *muqarnas* carved out of antique marble in the same mosque and you have a sense of the wonder of this period.

One of the most important Beylik buildings is the subject of this book – the marble-clad, exquisitely carved İlyas Bey mosque, built in and out of the ruins of the ancient Aegean city of Balat/Miletos. The book itself is a labour of love. It represents the commitment on the part of one family to the research, documentation and presentation of the mosque (and associated complex) of İlyas Bey, ruler of the Beylik of Menteşe, built at the very beginning of the 15th century. The Kayhan family, with deep roots in this region, sponsored a landmark conservation project undertaken under the leadership of the architect Cengiz Kabaoğlu and his company Ka-Ba. The Kayhans' belief in socially responsible projects and their family ties to the building led them to engage a firm with a reputation for the kind of careful, non-intrusive and technologically sound restoration that, alas, is too often lacking in Turkey these days. Their trust in Ka-Ba has resulted in the recent announcement of the signal honour of a prestigious 2012 Europa Nostra Conservation award for this project.

Visitors to the site of Miletos, lured by its Hellenistic and Roman ruins, will now be able to visit a marble and brick mosque that has been carefully cleaned, consolidated and stabilised (without being rebuilt) by this team of Turkish experts, and also to place it in the context of the excavated and conserved remains that surround it: baths, rows of cells that probably served as a medrese, and a graveyard. All sit on top of a rise in the middle of the archeological site overlooking the ruins of the city and the lush Menderes valley.

Those who are not so lucky as to live near this building will be able to "visit" it frequently thanks to this book. The second half, with its specialists' reports, will attract the attention of those interested in how conservation, engineering, technology, site management, archeology and art history now go hand in hand to make for sound preservation. We learn about geomagnetic prospecting and injectable mortars derived from nanotechnology, changes in pious formulae on Ottoman gravestones, the excavation of a ceramic kiln, and the nitty-gritty of the water and heating systems of hamams. Even these technical reports, however, are larded with one of the most appealing features of the book, the lavish, high-quality colour photographs.


CEMAL EMDEN

AEGEAN JEWEL: THE 15TH-CENTURY İLYAS BEY MOSQUE AT MILETOS

The first half of the book will appeal to anyone interested in learning about this wonderful building complex. The editors, both scholars in their own right, have assembled a team of top specialists. Essays place the İlyas Bey complex literally in its context, whether that be the physical fabric of the city of Balat or the historical context of southwestern Anatolia in the late-medieval period, and the Menteşeoğulları dynasty of which İlyas Bey was a ruler.

Most notable are articles by Professors Ayda Arel and M Baha Tanman. Arel brings her scholarly intelligence to bear on the rise of Turkish principalities along the Aegean coast beginning in the late 13th century. The historian Elisabeth Zachariadou, one of whose articles is reprinted here, has brought the full range of sources – Greek, Venetian, Genoese, Crusader, Turkish, Mamluk, etc – to bear on this period. Arel examines the repercussions of this cultural multiplicity in Menteşe architecture in general, and the İlyas Bey mosque in particular, investigating what she calls in her title "A Question of Belonging". Tanman, in turn, dwells on what he calls the building's "mysterious character", mixing Seljuk, early-Ottoman and Mamluk architectural traditions.

Whatever you call it, no one can deny the beauty of the refined craftsmanship of the mosque, and we should be grateful to all concerned for their efforts to preserve and to study it, and to share their results in this sumptuous and exemplary publication. It whets the appetite for more studies on the fascinating architecture of this unjustly understudied period.

Scott Redford is professor of archaeology and history of art and director of Koç University's Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations, Istanbul

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OUR MAN IN A MAELSTROM

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By Orlando Figes
Penguin £12.99

When Sir Henry Layard arrived in Istanbul aboard Queen Victoria's yacht on April 20, 1877, he was the sole ambassador of a great power in a city on the brink of war. His visit, he afterwards noted, encouraged speculation, excitement, hopes and fears. Sir Henry's time in Istanbul coincided with some of the darkest moments in Ottoman history: the loss of most of the Balkans, the arrival of a Russian army at what is today Yeşilköy, the Congress and Treaty of Berlin, the establishment and suppression of Turkey's first parliament, and the beginnings of Sultan Abdülhamid II's three decades of authoritarian rule.

As ambassador to the Porte at a time of mortal crisis, Layard held a dazzlingly influential position. No American envoy today enjoys the sort of ascendancy and access to the ruler that Layard had at the height of Britain's power. But it all went badly wrong. Able and brilliant though he was – as the best sections of these memoirs demonstrate – he was thwarted by two enemies whom he underrated. Abdülhamid did not want Layard's mix of liberal and constitutional reforms and eventually found a new political balance for the empire by tilting towards Russia. Back in London, William Gladstone, the Turcophobe Liberal leader of the opposition, was denouncing the appointment of Layard, a fellow Liberal, in the House of Commons even as he was on his way to Istanbul. The two men sparred in letters during Layard's time in the city, with the ambassador irking Gladstone by accusing him of causing the loss of many lives by his failure to speak up for Ottoman and Turkish victims of Christians. In 1880, almost three years to the day after Layard arrived in Istanbul, Gladstone was elected prime minister. Almost his first task was to remove Layard, a lifelong Turcophile who never saw Turkey again.

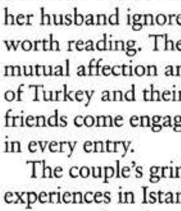
Worse was to come. The earlier phases of Layard's life had seen him enjoying a kind of stardom as a traveller, writer, politician, administrator, art collector and archaeologist, but his last years were overshadowed by deliberate humiliation and he remained a discredited figure long after his death. "His name faded into an oblivion partly induced by generations of specialists of diplomatic history nurtured in the Gladstonian tradition," writes Sinan Kuneralp.

In what is clearly a labour of love that will be a major development for diplomatic historians and connoisseurs of the late-19th-century Ottoman Empire, Kuneralp has edited sections of Layard's million-word diplomatic memoir which have lain unpublished in the British Library since his wife's death in 1912. The outcome is a hefty volume of 700 pages which goes a long way to fulfil Layard's hope of posthumous vindication, and to re-establish him alongside Stratford Canning as a towering figure among ambassadors.

Enormous amounts of political and administrative detail are lucidly set out. Layard was writing for his contemporaries and there are no indiscretions, but he was always a fine writer and sharp observer. A bestselling archaeological author in his own day, Layard provides riveting descriptions of going to dinner with Abdülhamid, and what the Sultan was like as a man. Admittedly the book reads in parts like a modern cabinet minister's hyper-factual memoir, but this is one of the most complex and important phases of Ottoman history, and Layard the skilled diplomat is a helpful and reasonably impartial guide.

While the ambassador was writing his despatches, his wife, Enid, was writing her diary. The Isis Press has also published the entries from her Istanbul years. Her brief summaries of the daily domestic and social details that her husband ignored are well worth reading. The Layards' mutual affection and their love of Turkey and their Turkish friends come engagingly through in every entry.

The couple's grim wartime experiences in Istanbul came 21 years after the end of a war that Turkey – and its British and French allies – won against Russia. Despite Layard's pessimism, Turkey survived the 1877–78 war against Russia, but if there had been no Crimean War, either Tsarist Russia would almost certainly have expanded southwards through the Ottoman lands all the way to the Mediterranean, or a much nastier war would have been necessary to prevent it doing so. What sort of country would Turkey be today if that had happened?



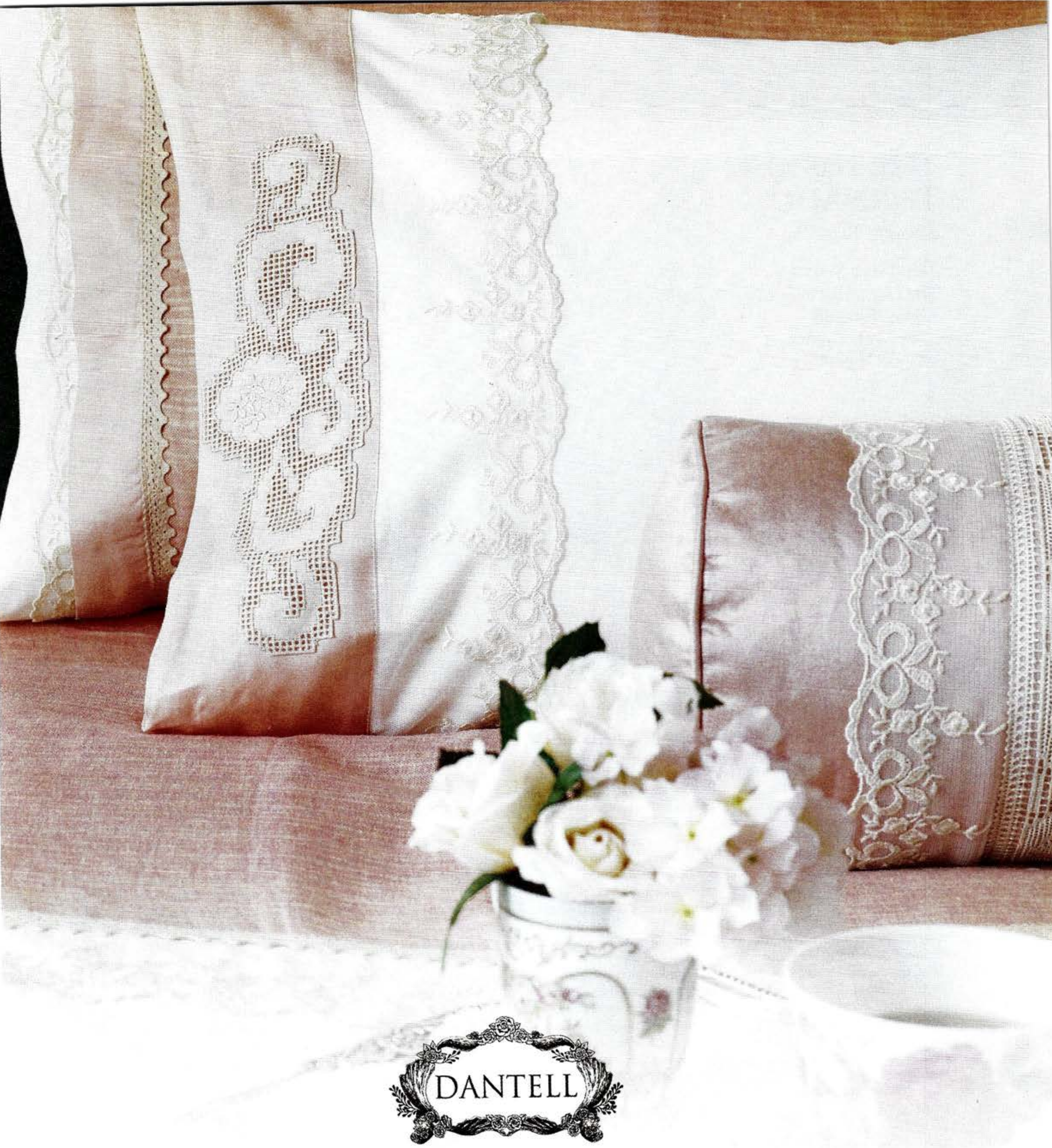
The Crimean War is important for other reasons. It was the first modern war, even if its generals did not grasp this at the time. The Crimea was, Orlando Figes writes, "the first war in history to be brought about by the pressure of the press and public opinion", a circumstance that he links to technological change: the development of the railways and the speeding up of communications. But it was also a war of religion, not just a great-power collision with a profound impact on all the countries involved. How many people realise, for example, that the fight with the bully in *Tom Brown's Schooldays* reflects the British–Russian struggle?

Orlando Figes's book on the Crimean War is the sixth hefty volume so far to emerge from a career mainly devoted to 20th-century Russia, yet it is the sort of book that takes many scholars a lifetime, using British, French and Ottoman sources as well Russian ones. What is more, it tries not to take sides, and the sufferings of both combatants and forgotten bystanders, such as the Crimean Tartars and Circassians who lost their homeland, come clearly into focus.

Both minorities figured on the edges of the war but later got painted out. Seventy-five years ago, when Harold Temperley wrote a classic account of the Crimean conflict, the Circassians got only a one-line mention and the Tartars none at all. Figes tells their story, sparing no detail of the cruel fate, virtual genocide in fact, which awaited Circassians and Tartars as a result of the expansion of Tsarist rule.

Figes is a marvellously lucid writer, and manages to compress an extraordinarily wide range of details into a narrative anyone can enjoy. Forgotten individuals speak again through brilliantly selected quotations. The account of Turkish history is fair and clear – though here and there are small slips which might be corrected in a later edition. Official executions for apostasy from Islam, as opposed to neighbourhood lynchings, were not taking place in the Turkey of the 1850s, and the last such execution happened in 1843, not 1844. One of the greatest Tanzimat statesmen, Aali or Âli, is mistakenly conflated with Mehmet Ali Pasha, a hated rival. Several of the dates given (both for his time as chargé d'affaires in London and as foreign minister) are not quite right, and there is rather too little about his role in the peace. Elsewhere, Fuad Pasha is wrongly given as an Ottoman delegate at the Paris Conference.

Small quibbles like these should not be allowed to spoil one's enjoyment of a magisterial account of a tragic war, one which is often spellbinding and invariably illuminating for the specialist and general reader alike.



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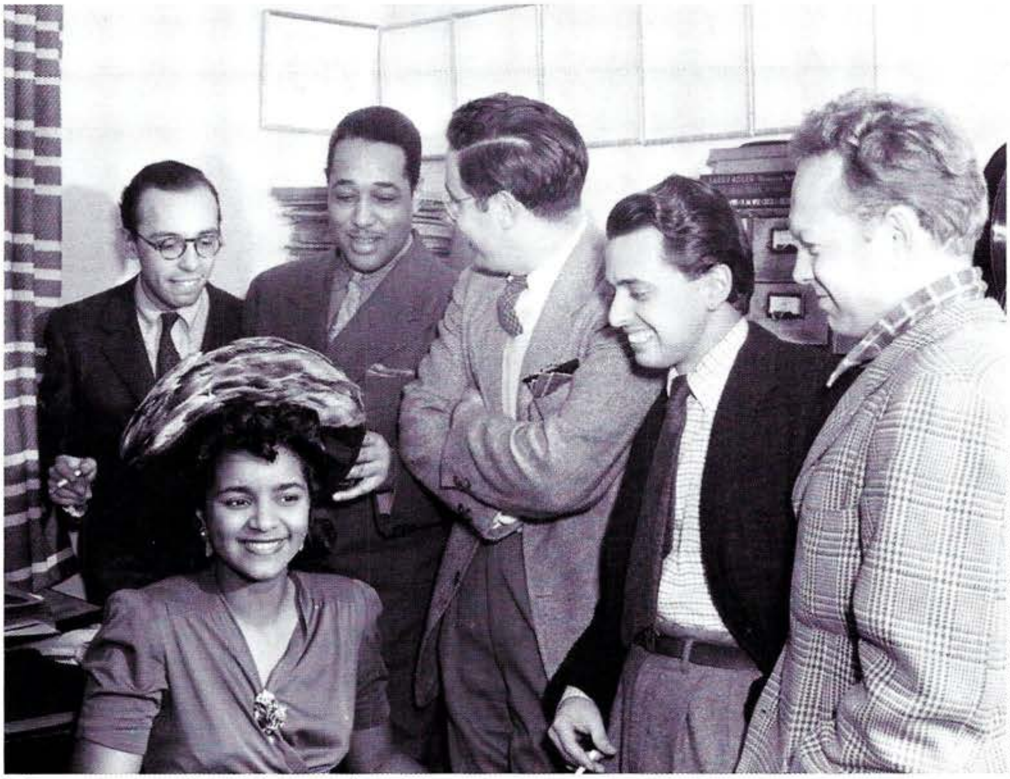
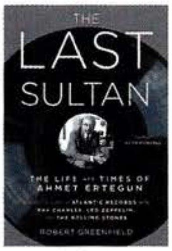
Thomas Roueché

THE LAST SULTAN
The Life and Times of
Ahmet Ertegun
By Robert Greenfield
Simon & Schuster $30



WILLIAM P GOTTLIEB COLLECTION/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

MARYLAND, 1941 AHMET ERTEGUN (LEFT) FELL IN LOVE WITH JAZZ AGED 10 AFTER HIS BROTHER NESUHI (SECOND FROM RIGHT) TOOK HIM TO SEE DUKE ELLINGTON (SECOND FROM LEFT) IN LONDON IN 1933



In 1978 *The New Yorker* published a two-part profile of Ahmet Ertegun, the Turkish–American popular music mogul, by the writer George WS Trow. The article, "Eclectic, Reminiscent, Amused, Fickle, Perverse", which took Trow seven years to write, is still regarded as one of the finest ever published by the venerable magazine. According to the then editor, William Shawn, "this piece was Proust". The article manages like little else to capture the ambience of Ertegun and his wife Mica's social whirl in Disco-era New York:

Crucial to the understanding of Mica's speech is the expression "Yah. It's divine, no?" This expression can mean "Yes, it's divine, I couldn't agree more" or "Yes, it's divine, but why bring it up?" or "No, I don't think it's divine" or "I wish you would go away." Mica uses it frequently, and in almost all circumstances it defies response and ends the conversation.

In this first major biography of Ahmet Ertegun, Robert Greenfield has a hard act to follow, something he himself acknowledges. *The Last Sultan* offers a new depth on Ertegun's life and work; nothing can of course match Trow's articles in capturing the essence of the man.

Ertegun was the son of an important Turkish diplomat, and grew up in Turkish embassies around the world, something Greenfield carefully records. Ertegun's company, Atlantic Records, was founded in 1947, and in 1967 he and his partner Jerry Wexler sold it for $17.5 million – less than half its worth at the time. Ertegun and Wexler remained at the hub of the organisation, Ertegun himself being particularly responsible for signing The Rolling Stones to the label in 1971.

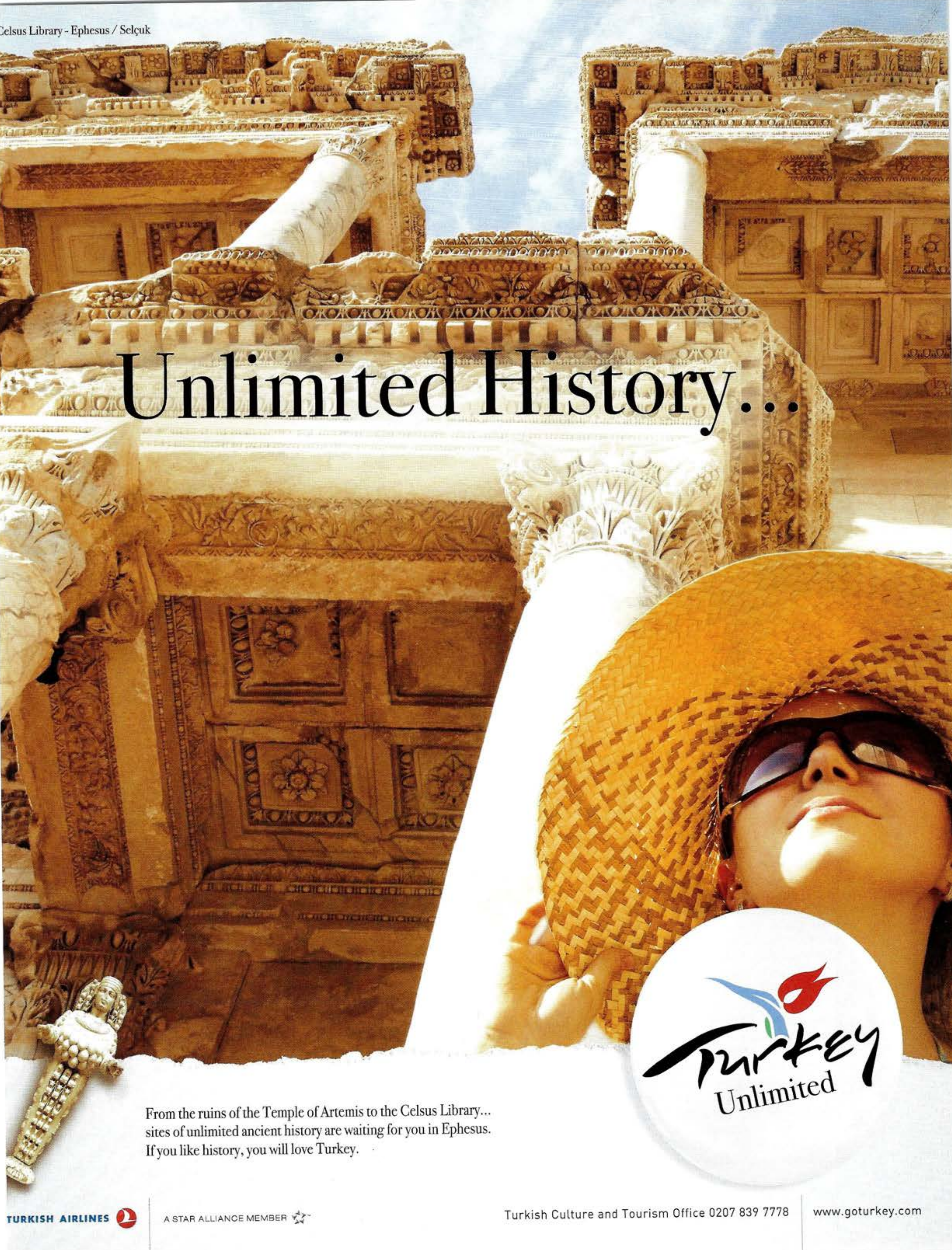
From the 1970s, no longer owning his own company, Ertegun's interests became notoriously more diverse, and Greenfield's book relies on Trow's article to help document the tornado of social activity that the Erteguns inhabited. Their beautiful house in Bodrum, as *Vanity Fair* noted, became "the hottest ticket in town", hosting everyone from Princess Margaret to Nureyev. Greenfield seems unperturbed by one guest's recollection of a girl "cleaning the stones in the courtyard with a toothbrush".

But Ertegun, more tornado than man, was no ordinary society figure. As Trow deftly commented, "It is as though, bored by a series of routine household errands, Ahmet had decided to do them in a Bugatti. This means that in mundane situations (and Ahmet is involved in many mundane situations) the most interesting transactions are the transactions between Ahmet and his Bugatti-like Public Manner, not the transactions between Ahmet and the situation itself."

Ertegun was famous for combining high and low – going from elegant dinners to strip joints in an evening, a habit that got up the nose of New York's classical elite. "Ahmet and Mica are simply people on the make," Truman Capote notoriously observed. This didn't stop him attending their parties. Trow quotes Diana Vreeland: "I had them to dinner before anyone you know had them to dinner... but why did I ask them back? It was the energy. Of course it was the energy." As David Geffen observed, "The one word you'd inevitably have to come up with for Ahmet was fun. Ahmet was a lot of fun." And of course it was having fun, in 2006 – at a Rolling Stones concert – that the great "Sultan of Soul" died.

Greenfield takes note of the Erteguns' prodigious activity as collectors, and one merely has to cast an eye over Mica's rich interiors to realise the depth of the couple's cultural understanding. Which is why it is not the slightest bit surprising that Mica decided to award Oxford University one of its largest endowments – $26 million, specifically for the Humanities – earlier this year. What is perhaps surprising is that she chose Oxford, a city the couple never visited. Addressing this recently in *The Daily Telegraph*, Mica said, "New York has the money, but Oxford has the culture." Perhaps posthumously the Erteguns are, in the words of the immortal George Trow, "taking Louis Vuitton luggage where Louis Vuitton has never been before"

For Thomas Roueché's article on the Turkish embassy in Washington, where Ahmet Ertegun lived as a boy, see Cornucopia 44



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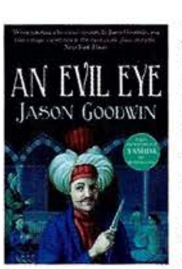
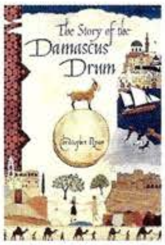


Jason Goodwin is a prize-winning historian and travel writer who, mid-career, created a fictional detective, Yashim, and plunged him into a series of terrifying adventures set among the dark alleys and subterranean passages of old Istanbul. Yashim has proved to be a wholly original creation, for he is a brilliantly deft cook, a half-Greek, half-Turkish Muslim who is a proud (if determinedly freelance) member of the old Ottoman court. He is also a eunuch, but one trained up in the palace school, so he can wrestle like a janissary, conduct himself with the modesty of an Ottoman gentleman-scholar and speak as many languages as a vizier.

What he shares with that otherwise determinedly Western pantheon of fictional detectives is a sharp eye for detail allied to an intuitive genius, with a mind more interested in unravelling the truth than upholding any state-sanctified standard of justice. He is also, like many of the detective breed, a self-contained individual, indifferent to fame and fortune, but with a subtle dependence on a few deeply trusted friends – such as Preen, the louche directrice of a theatre-circus troupe, and Palewski, the shabby, wine-loving scholar-ambassador of Poland, who has been marooned in old Istanbul in a disintegrating legation since the annexation of his nation by its three predatory neighbours. There is also the charming but world-weary Valide Sultan, the ancient Dowager Queen Mother, to whom Yashim is a devoted and entirely respectful servant. These secondary characters are vital aspects to the success of the Yashim detective novels. For they create a varied spread of prejudice and insight which further expands our experience of the old Ottoman Empire. And although you are utterly caught up in the devilish intricacies of the plot, what you are left with at the end of a Yashim mystery is a complex picture of Istanbul and its deeply grained history.

Without revealing the plot, I can warn readers of some of the subliminal pleasures that await a reading of *An Evil Eye*. Swift-moving caiques on the dark waters of the Bosphorus, the scent of grilled fish (and a mouthwatering recipe for stuffed mackerel) and a richly evocative re-creation of the 19th-century imperial palace at Beşiktaş, with the harem revealed as a place of dignity and immaculate order as well as intrigue. The historical background is so skilfully intermingled with the fabric of the plot (the Ottoman Empire caught between the ever-rising power of Russia to the north and khedivial Egypt to the south) that before you know it you have received a subliminal lecture in early 19th-century diplomacy. Translated as he is into 40 languages, Yashim has probably done more to reverse five centuries of European prejudice against "the Turke" than any flesh-and-blood ambassador.

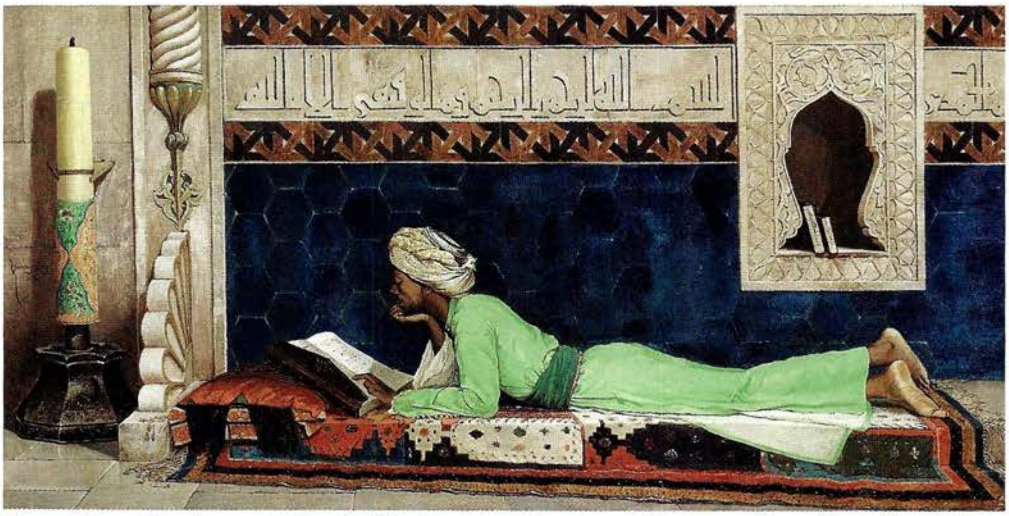


The Story of the Damascus Drum is a fabulous adventure story, scented with magical realism and resonating with a talking goatskin drum, that is set among the historical monuments of Syria, so that the reader gets to explore the island of the shipbuilders (Arwad), the cavernous vaults of the ruinous Krak des Chevaliers, the nunnery of Seydnaya and the old khans and mountainous hinterland of Damascus during the course of the tale. Although located in the late 19th century, it takes place in a timeless Levant, a crossroads of faiths still dominated by loyal servants of the sultan-caliph, not yet the 20th-century Baathist fortress of Arab nationalism.

Indeed the real landscape of the Damascus Drum is not of this world. Rather, it is shaped by *Tales from the Thousand and One Nights* and by the interior world of itinerant storytellers working their magic in the cafés, courtyards and festival gatherings of the past. So we can hiss at the vile machinations of the brigands, scheming villains, paid assassins and evil masterminds, as we fall further and further in love with both hero and heroine.

The Story of the Damascus Drum is also consciously part of that ancient Near Eastern tradition that buried valued spiritual teachings within a fast-paced plot or a comic short story. So running within the body of the tale is the everyday story of two individuals working to increase their self-discipline as a tool in the lifelong struggle first to understand, then make better use of themselves. Adepts might identify the teachings of ancient prophets and some modern and medieval saints among the book's characters and sacred landscapes. Fortunately, there is also enough bawdy laughter and *Midsummer Night's Dream* humanism to enchant a wider audience and perhaps also get them drumming. ◆

Barnaby Rogerson is the author of 'The Last Crusaders: The Hundred-Year Battle for the Centre of the World' (Little, Brown £20)



OSMAN HAMDI BEY, the great polymath of the late Ottoman Empire, was supremely playful in his orientalist paintings, which were made for the European market and are increasingly sought after: this boy reading, on sale at Sotheby's, has an estimate of £3-5 million. Details point to a mosque or medrese setting but, as Claude Piening of Sotheby's notes, the boy is very relaxed for someone in a mosque. The realism of the 1878 painting – the book is inscribed "Dictionary", the candlestick has been identified as western Iranian, the tiles match those in Istanbul's Çinili Köşk and the Yeşil Cami in Bursa – all contributes to a teasing ambiguity. In the top right, Hamdi Bey has signed his name as though it is part of the Kufic religious inscription.

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FAREWELL TO THE GUERRILLA GRANDEE

ROGER NORMAN SALUTES THE INCOMPARABLE STYLE AND SPIRIT OF THE WRITER PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR, WHOSE MASTERPIECE WAS 40 YEARS IN THE MAKING

PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR 1915-2011

GETTY

In the 19th century, officials at the British Foreign Office concerned with the eastern Mediterranean were divided into Philhellenes and Turcophiles, with the latter often in the majority. The distinction endured in the 20th century, not so much in the ministries, where the alliances in the First World War and the heroic Greek resistance to the Italians in the Second had tilted the balance, but among writers and travellers. Contemporary writers such as Louis de Bernières and William Dalrymple may span the Aegean divide, but many of an earlier generation did not. Lawrence Durrell was one, and Patrick Leigh Fermor another.

A Greek historian, Adonis Sanoudakis, writing after PLF's death last summer, described him as "neither a great Philhellene nor a new Lord Byron", arguing that the British supported the Cretan resistance groups in the Second World War only as long as the North African strategy demanded it. When the priority became shoring up the Greek monarchy, the Cretan resistance, with its leftish and republican tendencies, were left to their own devices, or actively undermined. PLF had been at the heart of the first of these phases, winning fame for the ambush and kidnap of the commanding German general, as depicted in the 1957 film *Ill Met by Moonlight*.

According to Sanoudakis, PLF was well aware of the ambivalence behind British policy but simply toed the line in the manner of a "classic British agent". He himself wrote little of the war in Crete but what there is strongly suggests he would never knowingly have been party to a betrayal of his comrades-in-arms in the Cretan mountains. He may not have been a new Byron and, despite swimming the Hellespont in the poet's honour (aged nearly 70), surely had no wish to be, but if he was not a "great Philhellene", one wonders who the devil was.

No reader of his book on the southern extremities of the Peloponnese, *Mani*, can doubt the immense affection and deep instinctive sympathy he had for the Greek people, not only the Maniotes but the Cretans, Epiriotes, Vlachs, Tsingani and almost every Greek soul he encountered in his unrivalled experience of walking and talking in Greek lands. This affection was clearly returned. Durrell recounts in *Bitter Lemons* how after one of the "tremendous" meals that regularly crop up in PLF's adventures, he was singing Greek folk songs with such enthusiasm and verve that a silent crowd of Corfiotes gathered outside the open window to listen.

Does PLF's love of Greece mean that he was anti-Turk? "One may utterly deplore, as I do myself fervently," he wrote, "that the Turks ever set foot in Europe." This is plain enough. "But," he went on to say, "it would be… absurd to blame them for the destruction of the Byzantine empire." These are verdicts of the historian, not the man. His first actual encounter with Turks, on an island in the Danube where a small Turkish community had miraculously survived since Ottoman times and maintained in splendid riverine isolation its traditional manners and customs, is recounted, in *Between the Woods and the Water*, with an almost reverential admiration for the grace and civility of the people.

When the hour of the *izan* arrived, "the hodja's torso emerged on the balcony under the cone of the minaret. Craning into the dusk, he lifted his hands and the high and long-drawn-out summons of the *izan* floated across the air, each clause wavering and spreading like the ring of sound from pebbles dropped at intervals into a pool of air. I found myself still listening and holding my breath when the message had ended and the hodja must have been half-way down his dark spiral."

PLF was too thoughtful a historian not to appreciate the complex political and cultural cross-currents of the region. Take the story, told in *Mani*, of Liberakis Yerakaris, oarsman in a Venetian galley at the age of 20, later notorious Manioti pirate, condemned to death by the Ottomans, reprieved by the grand vizier and granted – instead of summary beheading – the title of Bey of Mani, in which position he eventually wielded considerable influence with the Sublime Porte. Or, jumping a century or so, consider the encounter in Eskişehir, at the

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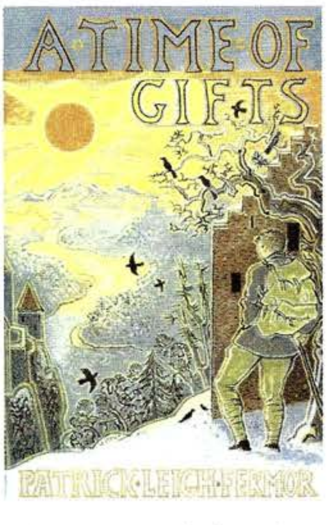
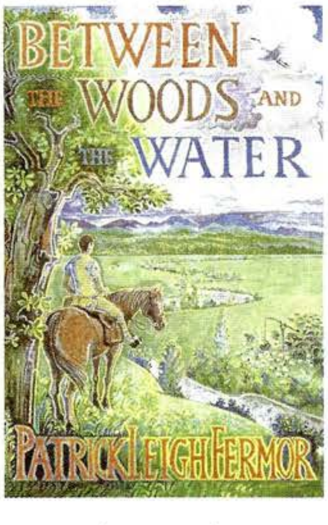



BETWEEN THE WOODS AND THE WATER
PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR

height of Atatürk's war of liberation, between Petros the Greek bombadier and Galip Bey, the captured Turkish major who, despite the fact that Galip's family were landowners and Petros was a simple peasant, "sat up all night smoking cigarettes and drinking coffee", recalling a shared boyhood in their Macedonian village.

PLF's interest was in individuals, clans and tribes rather than the politics of nations, and he well understood how real history transcends and diminishes national frontiers. He records with satisfaction how in earlier times the Sarakatsáns on the Greek side and the Yörüks on the Turkish would travel freely east and west in a kind of exchange migration, the Sarakatsán herders setting up their beehive huts on the Black Sea coast and the Yörüks pitching their black tents deep inside Macedonia.

That was in the days before the river Hebrus (or Evros or Meriç) had become an inviolable barrier. One feels that all of PLF's long life was somehow lived in an age – or a mood – predating what Norman Douglas called "the passport nuisance", which was to turn national borders into an ordeal. In his first long trip, on foot from the Hook of Holland to Istanbul in 1933, PLF crossed from Austria to Czechoslovakia apparently without noticing and was pursued down a hillside by a puffing border guard.

Fifteen hundred miles, on foot, at the age of 19? Paul Fussell suggests that the object was not, as it would be now, fame, or any sense of achievement, but because "that was what one did". Yet in the long history of eccentric British travellers, it was an ambitious first project, even if there was a troubled and troublesome adolescence to escape. Not only did he reach Istanbul as planned, two years later, but he wandered on, into Greece, Bulgaria and Romania, only returning to Britain to sign up at the start of the war. He had always envisaged a book of these travels, and later suggested that it was the main motivation – "A new life! Something to write about!" – yet the first volume, *A Time of Gifts*, took 40 years to appear, the second, *Between the Woods and the Water*, nearly 50, and the third was unfinished at the time of his death. Visitors to his home in Mani reported an eight-inch pile of manuscript on his desk, entitled *Volume III*. (John Murray plans to edit and publish this volume in the next couple of years.)

The long walk, in PLF's own description, was his university, teaching him to observe, scribble, question and think. It also turned out to be the foundation stone for his life's work as a writer. He always wrote in longhand, although in his 90s he planned to take typing lessons in order to speed things up (on a 1951 Olivetti). That plan didn't materialise, and perhaps we should be thankful that it didn't. His writing style is leisurely and digressive. He never seems in a hurry to get anywhere particular, but nothing seems out of place. His life motto was *solvitur ambulando* ("it is solved by walking"), and certainly his writing proceeds at the pace of a long walk, as if he thought like he walked and wrote like he thought. There is none of the fragmentation of the digital, which even an old Olivetti might have occasioned.

'All of PLF's long life was somehow lived in an age – or a mood – predating what Norman Douglas called "the passport nuisance"'

PLF's obituarist in the *Guardian*, James Campbell, said that he was "at some deep level essentially a poet". Dalrymple called him a prose-poet. Listen a moment. "Rich in digressions and vallonia oaks, the plain and the pale blue ridges glided by." "The peaks all round us sent darker volleys of shadow along their path, all of them streaming westwards and tilting down into the canyons." "The soft murmur of the town took over again, wooing me down into its midst."

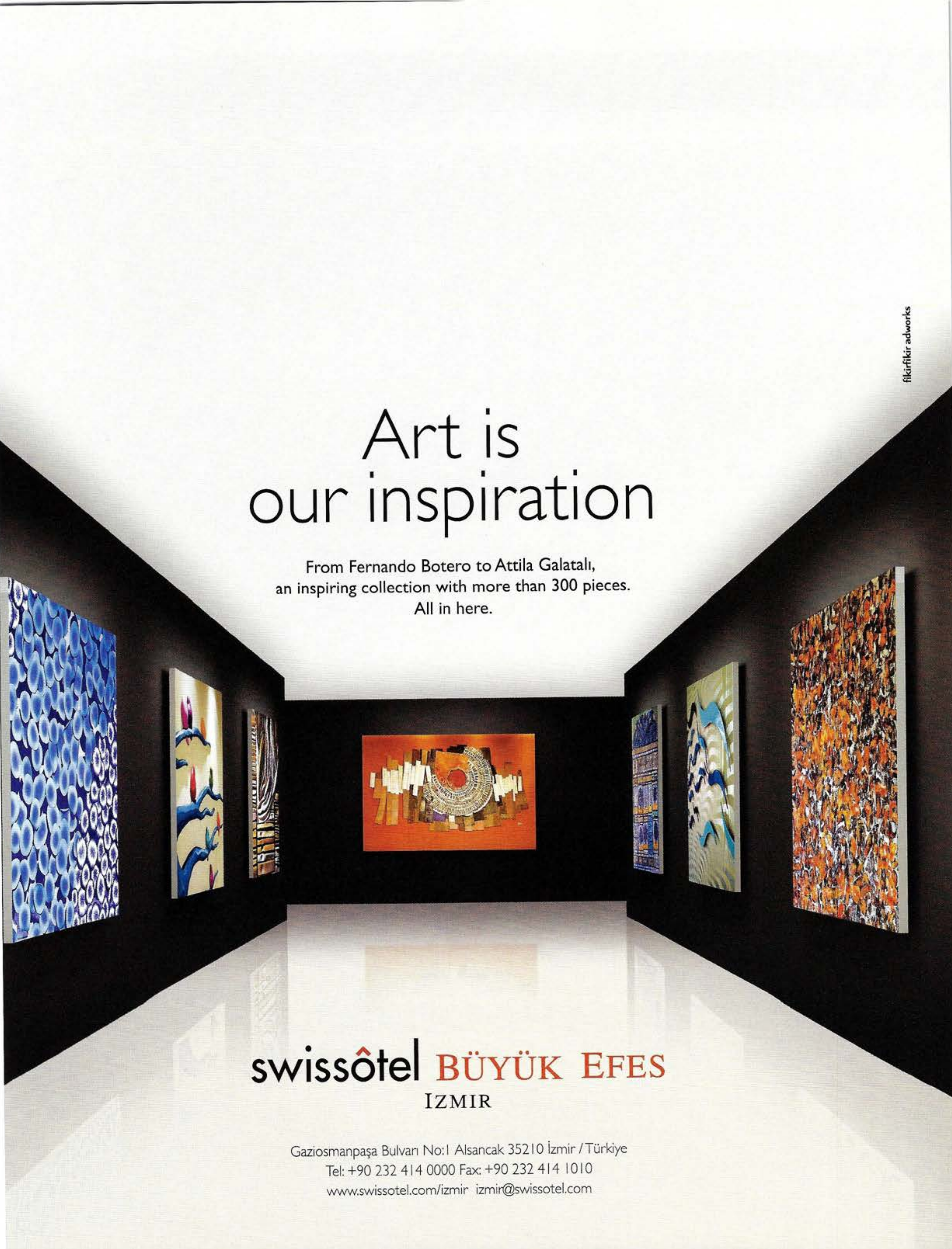
Dalrymple and Colin Thubron and Bruce Chatwin agreed in calling *A Time of Gifts* (the title is borrowed from a poem by Louis MacNeice) the best of travel books. Campbell referred to it as "one of the wonders of modern literature". Others argue that *Mani* is the most astonishingly interesting and lovely of PLF's works, illuminated by his profound delight in everything Greek – the people, their faces, their hands, the food, the wine, the songs, the buildings, the boats, the sea, the sea. A whole page is devoted to eyes and three pages to the light.

"All the vapours that roam the Italian atmosphere and muffle the outlines of things are absent here. A huge magnifying glass burns up the veils of distance, making objects leagues away leap forward clearly as though they were within arm's length... A distant cordillera completes a curve begun by the vein along the back of a plane-tree leaf, a far-off belfry has the same intensity as a goat's horn a few yards away, a peninsula leans forward to strike the stem of a dried-up thistle."

In writing out this passage, one is tempted to go on and on, for it gets even better. There is something in the quality of observation and imagination that is truly extraordinary, and still effortless.

How did the troublesome teenager turned war hero, "clubman, guerrilla and grandee" in Dalrymple's words, played on screen by the Fifties matinee idol Dirk Bogarde, come by such insights? There may be a clue in the slimmest of his books, *A Time to Keep Silence*, which recounts brief sojourns in French monasteries, experiences which he described as a "supernatural windfall". The book is about monks and monasticism, attended by PLF's sure grasp for the history, the architecture, the rules and patterns of things. With the enforced inward-looking silences and the pervasive contemplative mood, it is also about himself. His reaction to monastic life is somewhere between admiration and incredulity, but he became aware that "the troubled waters of the mind grow still and clear, and much that is hidden away... floats to the surface and can be skimmed away; and after a time one reaches a state of peace that is unthought of in the ordinary world". One imagines a similar non-ordinary state taking hold when he was writing.

His curiosity about monasteries took him to Cappadocia, travelling "from Constantinople through Broussa and Ankara through the lion-coloured uplands of Anatolia to the ancient Caesarea... Biblical and gaunt. Buffalo carts and an occasional string of camels, all heading for the odd town [Kayseri] on the flank of an extinct volcano". His preference for obsolete names suggests an older time, as do the images redolent of the past – lions, camels, the Bible, the extinct volcano. But he's not at home here as he always is in Greece. The ravine leading to Ürgüp is



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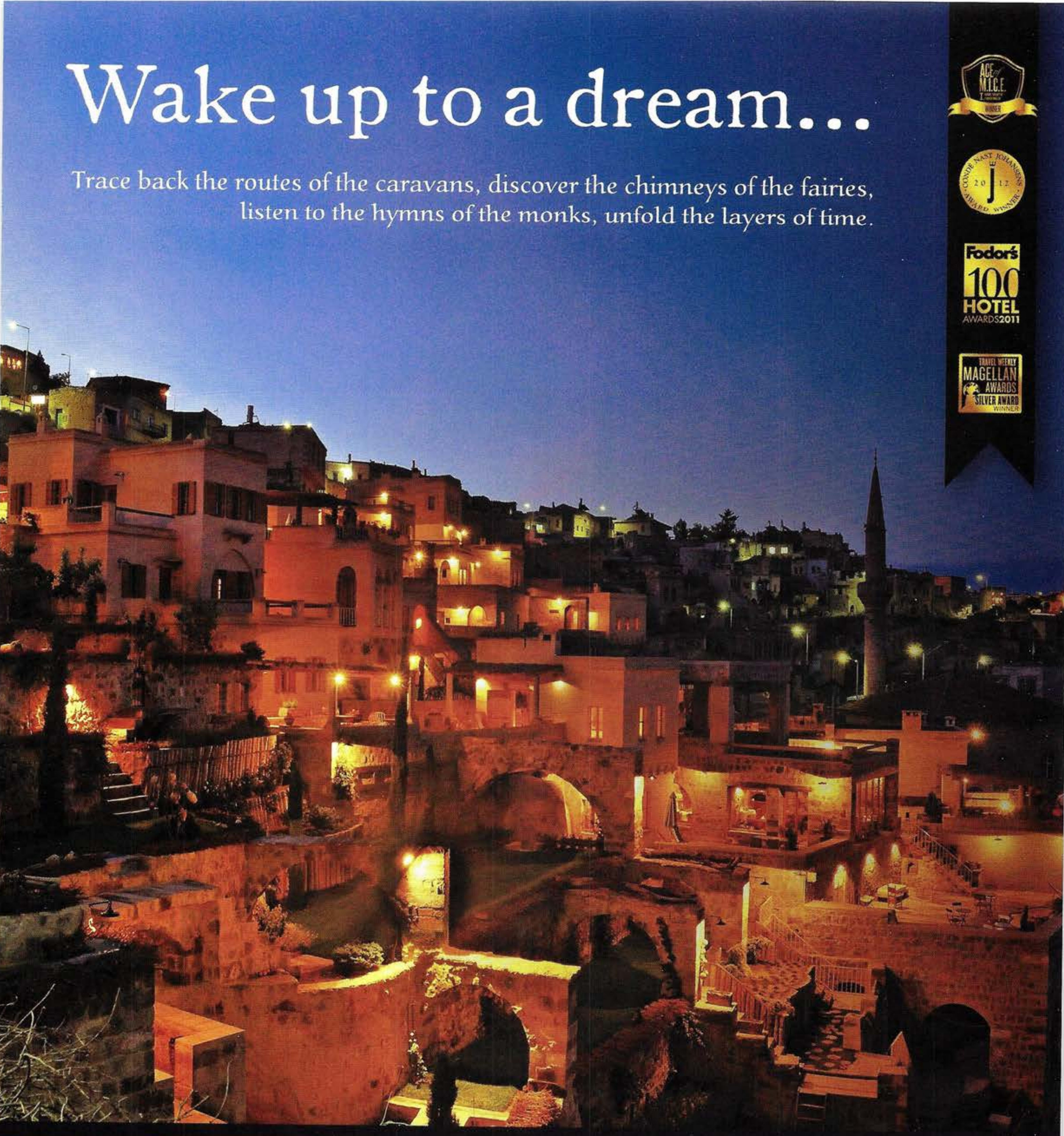
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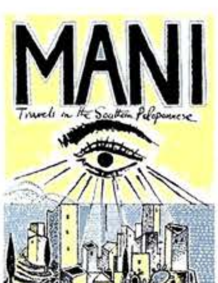

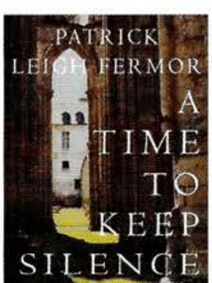

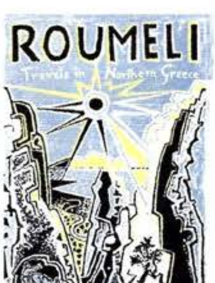

"tormented"; "cloth-capped Turks bubbling in silence over their nargiles" are "the last vestiges of humanity before the labyrinth swallowed us up". The church interiors are "tenebrous", Solomon and Elijah "glower" from the columns, "the blind matrix of rock presses in on all sides". Outside, "the day seemed stationary, as if Joshua, conjuring the cobalt sky, had commanded the sun to stay still".

The half-dozen or so pages on Cappadocia wonder at the industry of the 11th-century monks who carved out exact replicas of Byzantine churches, complete with windows that can never open, arches and columns that support nothing, apses, basilicas and cupolas all from a single rock. Who were these people, why did they resort to this lunar landscape, what were they fleeing, and what caused them, suddenly, to move on, leaving behind them almost indestructible monuments to an isolated sanctity?

What's missing, in comparison with his tales of Greece, is the human contact, the larger-than-life characters that spring up in every Greek village and around every feasting table. In "The Rock Monasteries of Cappadocia", there are no people, there is no dialogue, no folk memory. Apart from the bubbling nargile smokers, only a handful of women appear, on their way to the well. "On their heads their right hands supported heavy pitchers, and at our approach their left hands drew their veils across their faces with a fluttering and simultaneous motion." No word is spoken.

This may have been partly due to the natural reserve of Anatolian villagers and the unlikelihood of conversing with the women. But one suspects more recondite influences. The land was strange, the mysteries more intractable. Cappadocia, like so many places in Turkey, has a sense of uniqueness, as if the Anatolian landscape has over the centuries given birth to quite separate marvels – Nemrut, Hatay, Pammukkale, Sumela, the City of Midas, the citadels of the northeast – each requiring distinct and barely related explanations, whereas Greece, for all its variety, has always a quality of Greekness. No one has understood this quality better than Paddy Leigh Fermor or expressed it with a finer touch. ◆

The novelist Roger Norman has spent equal amounts of time living in Greece and Turkey. He was a wheelbarrow farmer on Euboia for years. In 1995, he walked from Istanbul to Athens for a Turkish–Greek charity, writing for the Turkish Daily News as he went. He now lives in Eskişehir and lectures at Anadolu University. rnorman@anadolu.edu.tr

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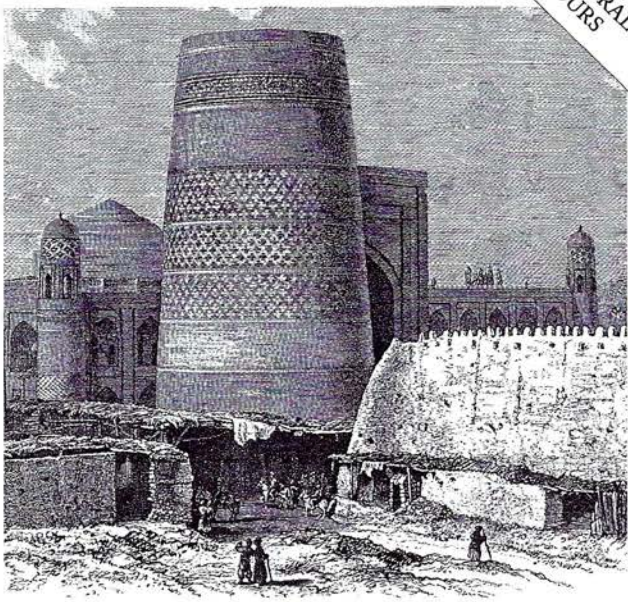

Khiva, Grand Minaret, wood engraving from 'Russian Pictures' 1889 (detail)

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İSTANBUL

Bloodshed in the Balkans

THE FIRST BALKAN WAR, A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, IS AN OBSCURE AFFAIR, OVERSHADOWED BY THE FIRST WORLD WAR THAT FOLLOWED. BUT IT ENDED THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE IN EUROPE AND CAME CLOSE TO ENDING TURKEY ITSELF. IT LEFT ALMOST HALF A MILLION REFUGEES AND THREE TIMES AS MANY DEAD.

DAVID BARCHARD TELLS THE STORY OF A CATASTROPHIC CONFLICT

The Balkan Wars, whose centenary falls in 2012 and 2013, shaped the geography of modern Europe almost as much as the two world wars, banishing Turkey to the sidelines of the continent. Unlike the two world wars, however, the Balkan Wars' effects were sudden and catastrophic. At the beginning of 1911 the Ottoman Empire was still one of the largest states in the Balkans, stretching as it had for hundreds of years from Istanbul to the shores of the Adriatic and including many of the greatest cities of southeastern Europe.

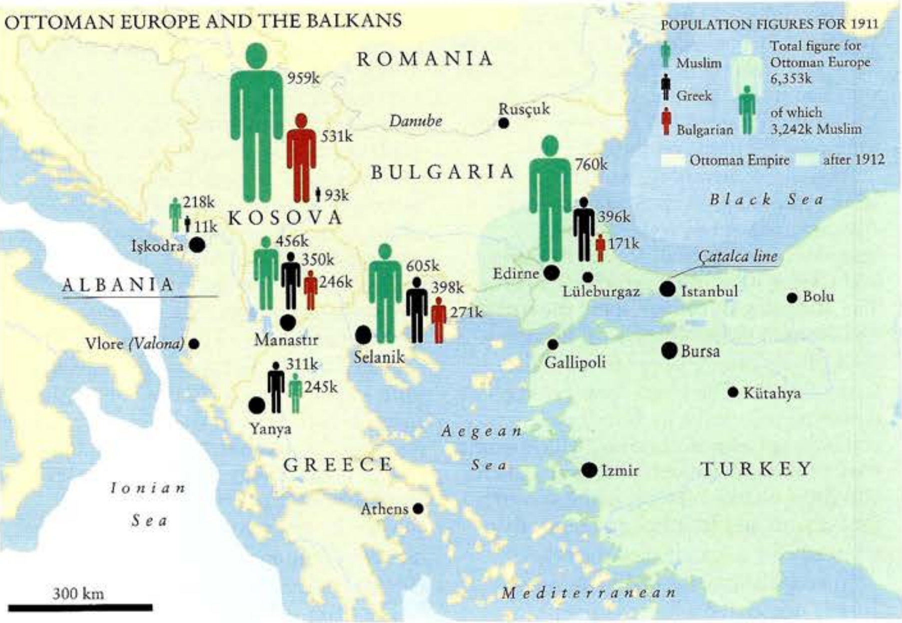
Just two years later, by the spring of 1913, Turkey had lost its European empire for ever and was fighting desperately to defend Istanbul, with the capital's fate dependent on the Çatalca Line, a string of 30 forts from Terkos, on the Black Sea, right down to Büyükçekmece, on the Sea of Marmara, today a suburb of Istanbul. A further defeat might have meant the end of Turkey.

But how did this come about – and why so suddenly? The first big blow to Turkish power in the Balkans had come in 1878, when the empire lost about two-thirds of its territory at the Congress of Berlin. The newly created Christian successor states to the Ottomans (Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria) were all eager to grow further at Ottoman expense, but even during the empire's weakest years they were not strong enough to go to war with it. Worse still, their claims to land to liberate overlapped and conflicted, and there were two further still-submerged nationalities, the Albanians and Macedonians, also eager for their homelands.

The region's flashpoint was Macedonia, where a violent three-way struggle had been in progress between Greeks, Bulgarians and Muslims for over a decade. This had already triggered one enormous upheaval: the July 1908 uprising inside the Ottoman Army which turned into the Young Turk revolution, which in turn ended 32 years of personal rule by Sultan Abdülhamid.

Immediately after the revolution a British diplomatic despatch compared Turkish and Bulgarian military strength and concluded

ABOVE CAPTURED TURKISH GUNS AT KIRKLARELI, THRACE (NOEL BUXTON)
RIGHT TURKISH TROOPS DIGGING A TRENCH AT ÇATALCA, NOW A SUBURB OF ISTANBUL (DAILY MIRROR) AND OTTOMAN ISTANBUL'S LAST LINE OF DEFENCE IN 1912
BELOW THE POPULATION OF OTTOMAN EUROPE IN 1911, BY PROVINCE AND RELIGION (BASED ON JUSTIN MCCARTHY'S 'DEATH AND EXILE'). THE BALKAN WAR OF 1912–13 LEFT THE BALKANS PREDOMINANTLY CHRISTIAN



OTTOMAN EUROPE AND THE BALKANS
POPULATION FIGURES FOR 1911
Muslim
Greek
Bulgarian
Total figure for Ottoman Europe 6,353k
of which 3,242k Muslim
Ottoman Empire
after 1912
ROMANIA
Danube
Rusçuk
BULGARIA
Black Sea
959k
531k
93k
218k
11k
KOSOVA
İşkodra
456k
350k
246k
ALBANIA
Manastır
Vlore (Valona)
605k
398k
271k
Selanik
760k
396k
171k
Edirne
Lüleburgaz
Çatalca line
Istanbul
Bolu
Gallipoli
Bursa
Kütahya
311k
245k
Yanya
Aegean Sea
GREECE
Izmir
TURKEY
Ionian Sea
Athens
300 km
Mediterranean

SUSANNA HICKLING

'Straying far outside the supposed neutrality of journalism, Bourchier of The Times used his good offices with the kings and prime ministers of the Balkans to persuade three chronically suspicious countries to swallow their differences and form the alliance known as the Balkan League'

that the Bulgarians were stronger. Aware of the empire's weakness, successive Ottoman governments worked to remodel it along modern administrative lines, with the army restructured on German lines under a chief of general staff.

But before the modernisation was complete, Turkey suffered an unexpected hammer blow. In September 1911 Italy invaded her outlying provinces in Libya, taking Tripoli in just a fortnight. Turkish resistance regrouped and scored some tangible successes, but in retaliation an Italian fleet sailed into the Aegean, grabbed the almost entirely undefended Dodecanese and temporarily blocked the Dardanelles.

So in the summer of 1912 Turkey was reeling from a humiliating defeat. Its political life, now based on a parliamentary system, with the sultan a mere figurehead, was in constant turmoil. As governments tried to grapple with the empire's problems, tempers were feverish. Old-guard politicians strove to retrieve the situation, while the military became ever more entangled in politics and administration. The most powerful group of junior officers, though as yet excluded from power, was the Committee of Union and Progress, the Young Turks' party and secret society which had made the 1908 revolution. It was largely disregarded by the empire's veteran politicians.

There were changes of government in July and in October, but the strong man in both cabinets was Nazım Pasha, the 56-year-old minister of war. A tough veteran soldier, trained by the French at the Saint-Cyr military academy, Nazım was on very bad terms with the Committee of Union and Progress but powerful enough to impose his terms on the cabinet.

As summer advanced, Montenegro launched mountain raids against Turkey's Albanian provinces, trying to seize Shkodër (then Scutari). Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece were also becoming bellicose. The Turkish government spent the summer and autumn trying to stave off hostilities through diplomatic approaches to the Great Powers. The Great Powers were unwilling to become involved, and certainly not as peacemakers, which would have prolonged Turkish rule. Both Austria and Russia had long-term ambitions over the Balkans and Istanbul, but neither yet felt ready for a war against the other.

To keep the Italians out of the war, Turkey negotiated a humiliating peace with Italy, purchasing neutrality by surrendering Libya and the islands while many officers plausibly believed they stood a fair chance of winning if they continued to fight. But the peace was not signed until mid-October, at almost exactly the moment that war officially broke out with Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece.

Public opinion and the mood of the army were wildly excited and strongly in favour of a war to teach the Balkan countries a lesson. This was the time when Turkish nationalism was forged, as seen throughout the 20th century, with mass meetings in Istanbul.

While Turkey was struggling to make peace, its three Balkan enemies, who normally distrusted each other, had struck a pact to fight together. What was the catalyst that enabled them to do so? Perhaps it was Russia, which certainly exerted a subtle backstage influence in nudging the rival countries to form an alliance against the Turks. But the *Times* correspondent in the Balkans, James David Bourchier, an Irishman and firm friend of the Bulgarians and Greeks, and a long-standing opponent of Turkish rule, also seems to have played a part. Straying far outside the supposed neutrality of journalism and representing nobody but himself, Bourchier used his good offices with the kings and prime ministers of the Balkans to persuade three chronically suspicious countries to swallow their differences and form the alliance known as the Balkan League. The result was that in late October 1912 the armies of Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece co-ordinated their attacks: something the Turks did not expect.

The size of the war area and the military balance between the two sides helps explain why the alliance was needed, and also why it succeeded. Turkey was estimated to have a total of 500,000 men and 1,000 artillery guns in Europe, while its most formidable enemy, Bulgaria, had only 400,000 men and 700 guns. Altogether, contemporaries estimated, the Balkan League could put about 700,000 men in the field, but was better equipped, with a total of 1,550 guns. On the other hand, Nazım Pasha, now declared supreme commander, and his deputy, Hadi Pasha, had to plan strategy and tactics for several war theatres. Turkey had two big war theatres to defend and several minor ones, and was fighting in a vast arc from the Adriatic to the Black Sea.

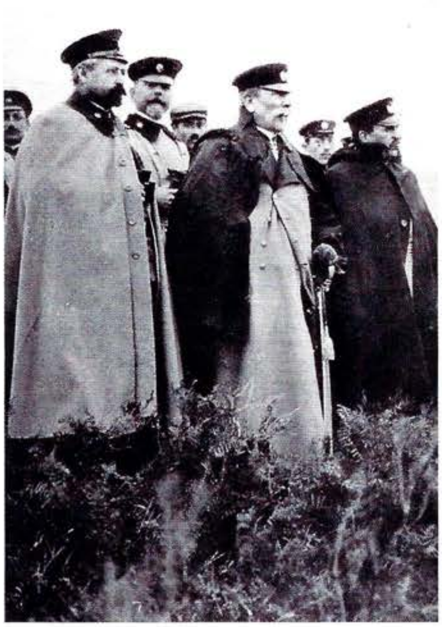
The main priority for the Turkish commanders was to defend Thrace against Bulgaria. Bulgaria had the best army and was known to be aiming at the former Ottoman capital of Edirne and Thrace. Edirne was a major military stronghold. If it fell, the rest of Thrace and Istanbul would be in acute danger. So the eastern front received the most attention and resources. However, it was there that things turned out worst of all.

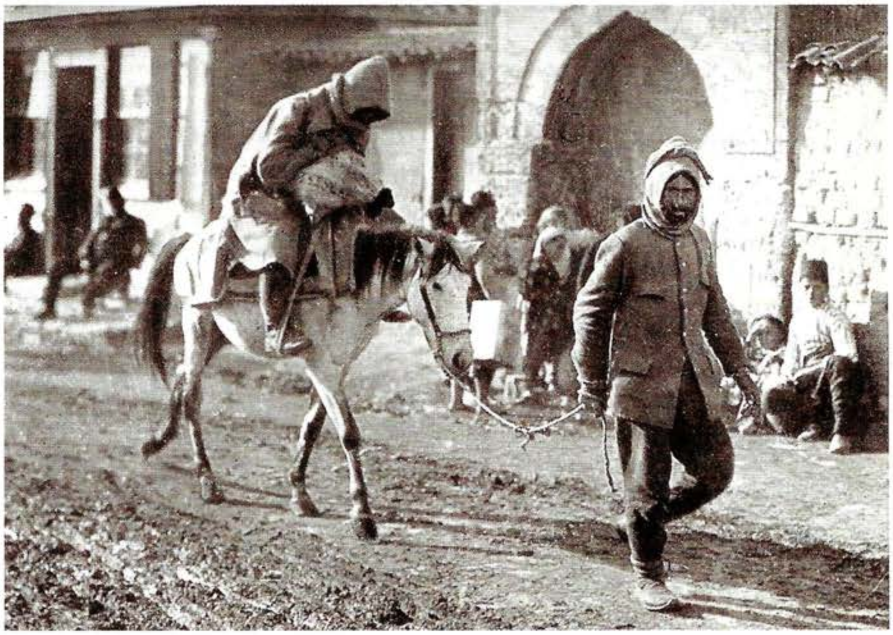
Nazım Pasha's plan was to use Edirne as bait, defending Turkey's border with Bulgaria only lightly and luring the main Bulgarian army into Ottoman territory, where they would be encircled by two corps coming from the north and south. That would knock out Bulgaria and safeguard Istanbul, and the alliance would be shattered.

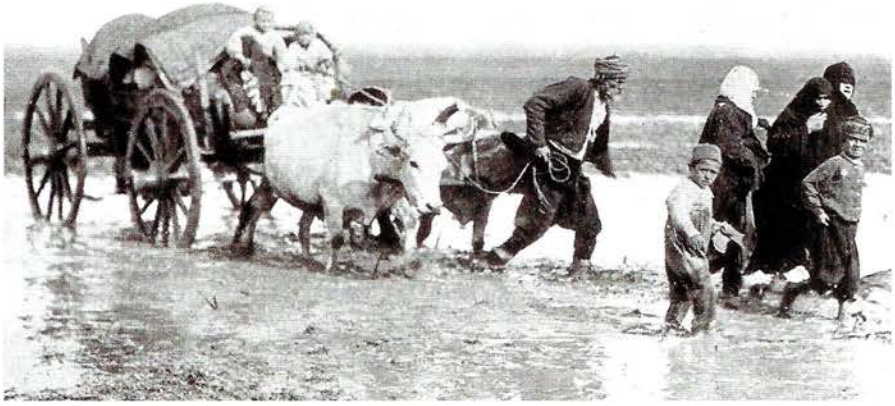
War was not declared until October 17, after Turkey rejected a Balkan League note demanding concessions in Macedonia. The Great Powers issued warning notes to both sides but made it clear they would not interfere in the struggle. Troops of the Balkan countries then massed. Nazım Pasha made a dignified and chivalrous proclamation, which impressed Europe. King Ferdinand of Bulgaria issued a bragging crusader manifesto, talking of the war of the Cross against the Crescent and saying he was continuing the work of the Russian tsars. Europe was less impressed; the Şeyhülislam, the empire's foremost cleric, responded with a declaration of Holy War. Muslim populations in the Balkans were terrified and began fleeing to Turkey for safety.

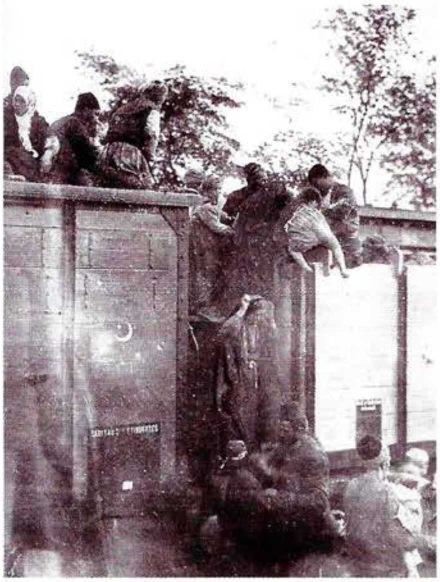
In the next three days the Serbs captured Prishtina and Novi Pazar, and a few days later routed the western Ottoman army at Kumanova, capturing Skopje (Üsküp) on October 26. The Ottoman high command had completely underestimated Serbian military capabilities and paid for it with a rout which ended five centuries of rule.

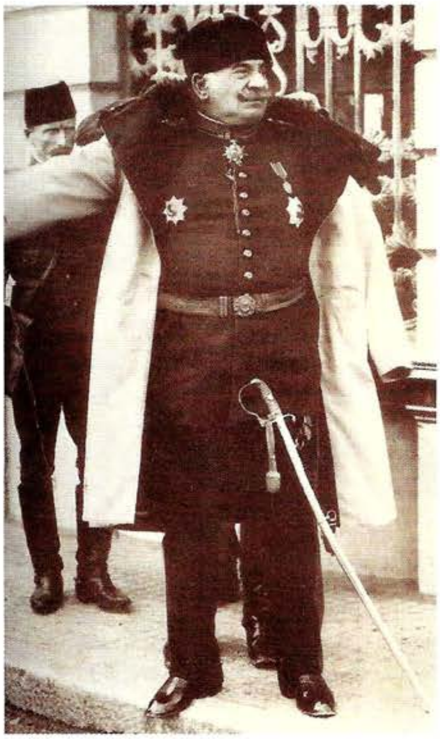
Simultaneously there was an even bigger disaster in Thrace. The Bulgarians had not fallen into Nazım Pasha's trap but advanced on Kırklareli (then Kırk Kilise), capturing it on October 24 and then Rodosto (Tekirdağ) six days later, defeating the Turkish army in a massive battle lasting several days at Lüleburgaz. Consequently Edirne was cut off and under siege, while the Ottoman forces fled back to the Çatalca Line on the outskirts of Istanbul. Turkish prospects now looked very poor. "It is no longer an











Top row General Savoff and other Bulgarian generals directing operations (Noel Buxton); bringing in the wounded at Çorlu (Herbert Baldwin)
Middle row Refugees near Seyitler (Herbert Baldwin); Bourchier, the Times correspondent; Turkish troops retreating near Çorlu after the Battle of Lüleburgaz (Herbert Baldwin)
Bottom row Refugees boarding at Çorlu; their overturned train at Seidler (Seyitler) (both Herbert Baldwin); Nazim Pasha, minister of war (Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett)

'Nazım Pasha, bristling with indignation, had confronted the intruders and been shot dead on the spot, in what was no doubt considered a fitting end for the man who had lost the entire European Ottoman Empire outside Istanbul'

army, it is a collection of pitiful creatures who are incapable of self-defence… against the irresistible attack of the Bulgarians," wrote the *Times* correspondent.

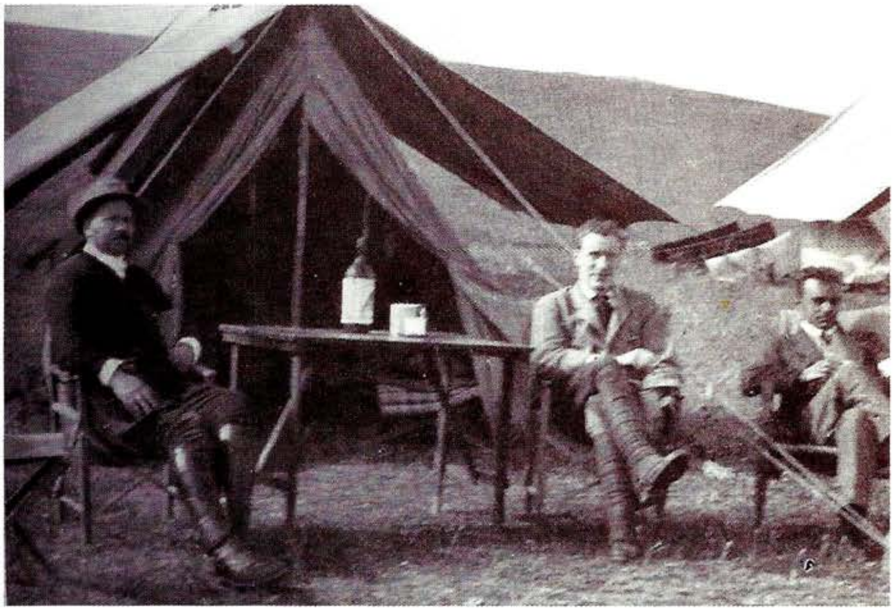
On November 4 – two-and-a-half weeks after the declaration of war – the Ottoman government, realising the position was hopeless, appealed to the Great Powers to help achieve a ceasefire. But the Powers did not reply. So an Ottoman Greek deputy, Musurus Bey, was sent to put out feelers for a bilateral deal with Bulgaria.

But the Balkan League armies pressed ahead on all fronts. The two great prizes were Salonica (Thessaloniki) and Edirne, and questions were already being asked in the world's press about the future of Istanbul – where the bombardment along the Çatalca Line could be heard for weeks. Salonica fell quickly. Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece all sent armies. Taking the island of Thassos on the way, the Greeks seized Salonica and appointed a Greek governor on November 8. (The former Sultan Abdülhamid II, who was in exile there, had been whisked to safety four days earlier on a German gunboat.) Taking Salonica was the crowning achievement of the 50-year reign of George I of Greece – though only two months later he would be murdered there by one of his countrymen.

Edirne proved more stubborn. The city withstood a combined Bulgarian and Serbian siege for nearly four months before surrendering on March 29, 1913. The capture was seen as the greatest feat of Bulgarian arms and a major step towards taking Istanbul. As it turned out, the Bulgarians would be in the city for less than four months themselves, and they had taken it only with help from the Serbians.

The empire's entire future now depended on holding the Çatalca Line, and at first the Bulgarians and their friends in Europe were optimistic of their chances of taking it. In mid-November the German press even reported that the line had been pierced. The report was wrong. The Powers again made it clear they were not prepared to help Turkey. In a speech at the Guildhall on the day Salonica fell, Herbert Asquith, Britain's prime minister, pledged that the victors would be "allowed to keep the prizes of victory".

What did these words mean in human terms? As Asquith spoke, the fields and roads of Thrace were full of refugees fleeing from the lost territories. It was not only Turks but also Greeks who fled before the Bulgarian arms; Muslims across the Balkans bore the brunt of the defeat. *The Times* reported: "Over 30,000 [Muslim] families are believed to have entered the capital during the last three weeks." The full figures for this forced migration – ignored at the time and hardly noticed since – are horrendous. Around 450,000 refugees arrived in Turkey and were settled across Anatolia, but the number of dead may have been more than three times that. This was the price paid for creating a predominantly Christian Balkans, where Muslims would afterwards survive only in isolated pools.



WESTERN JOURNALISTS COVERING THE WAR AT ÇORLU (ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT)

Throughout the rest of the winter and into the first months of 1913 the fighting dragged on, but the line at Çatalca held. The Great Powers presented a note to Turkey offering peace terms which would have ceded Edirne. The old guard, Kamil Pasha, the grand vizier, and Nazım Pasha, felt there was no alternative but to give in. The Ottoman cabinet was at work in the vizier's offices drafting its acceptance on January 23 when Talat Bey, one of the committee's three main leaders, appeared with a demand from the Young Turks for Kamil Pasha to resign. It was brushed aside. Just after lunch the cabinet became aware of a crowd of 200 people in the street outside, waving flags and led by Enver Bey, the most charismatic of the Young Turks, on a white horse. Enver and Talat stormed into the cabinet room and, at gunpoint, forced Kamil Pasha to write out his resignation, which was promptly conveyed to a dismayed sultan.

Kamil's readiness to resign was no doubt increased by an incident as the Young Turks forced their way in. Nazım Pasha, bristling with indignation, had confronted the intruders and been shot dead on the spot, doubtless considered a fitting end for the man who had lost the entire European Ottoman Empire outside Istanbul.

The old guard was swept aside and for the first time the Young Turks held power directly, with a veteran general, Mahmut Şevket Paşa, heading a cabinet in which Enver was minister of war and Talat minister of the interior. The Young Turks pledged to turn the tide of the war and save Edirne for Turkey. By July they had done so. The later stages of the First Balkan War, however, are a story for another occasion. ◆

The photographs in this article are from *The War and the Balkans*, by Noel Buxton (1915), *A War Photographer in Thrace: An account of personal experiences during the Turco-Balkan war*, by Herbert F Baldwin (1912), and *With the Turks in Thrace*, by Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett (1913). *Death and Exile: The ethnic cleansing of Ottoman Muslims, 1821–1922*, by Justin McCarthy (Princeton, $35), charts in graphic detail the shifts in population caused by the Balkan Wars

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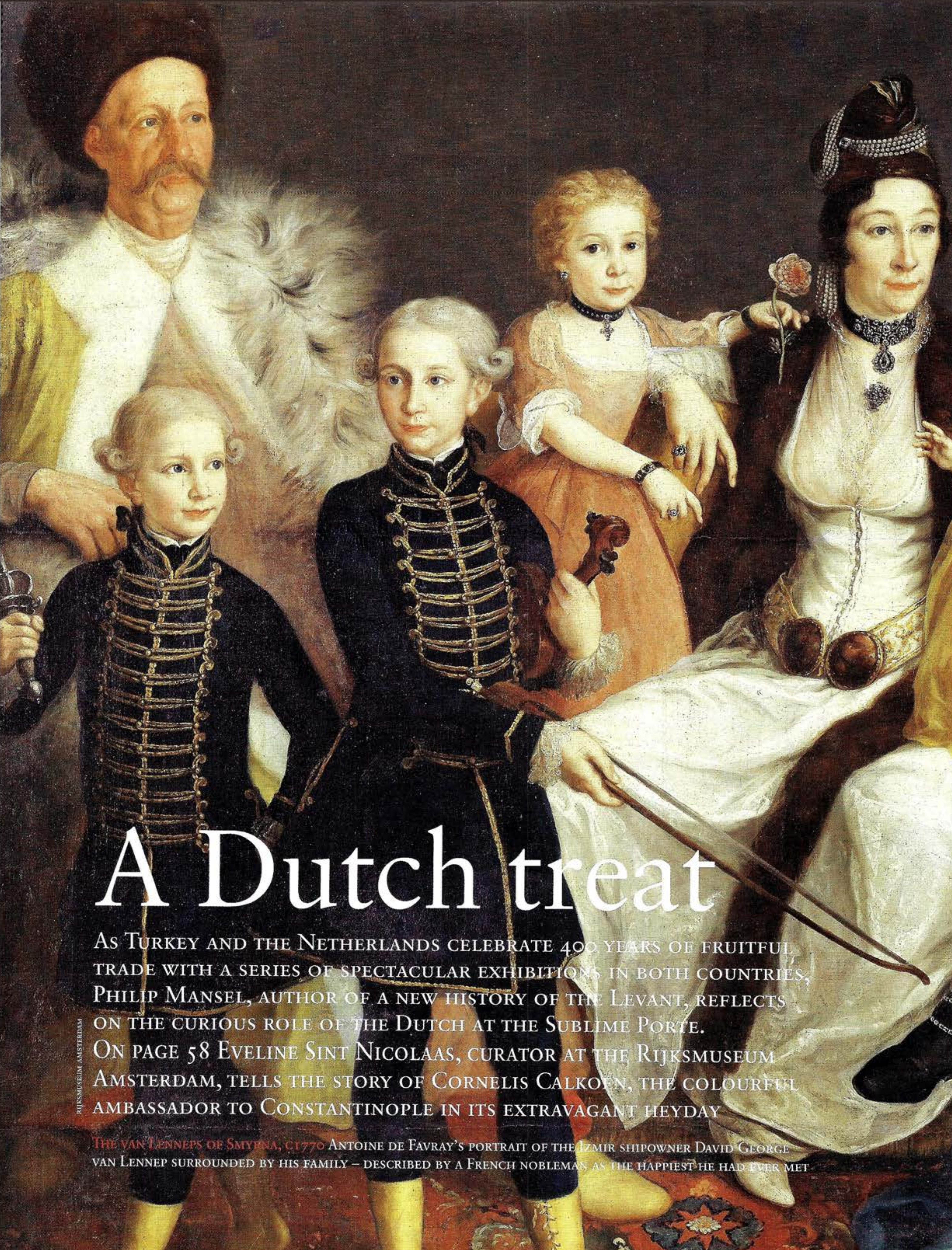
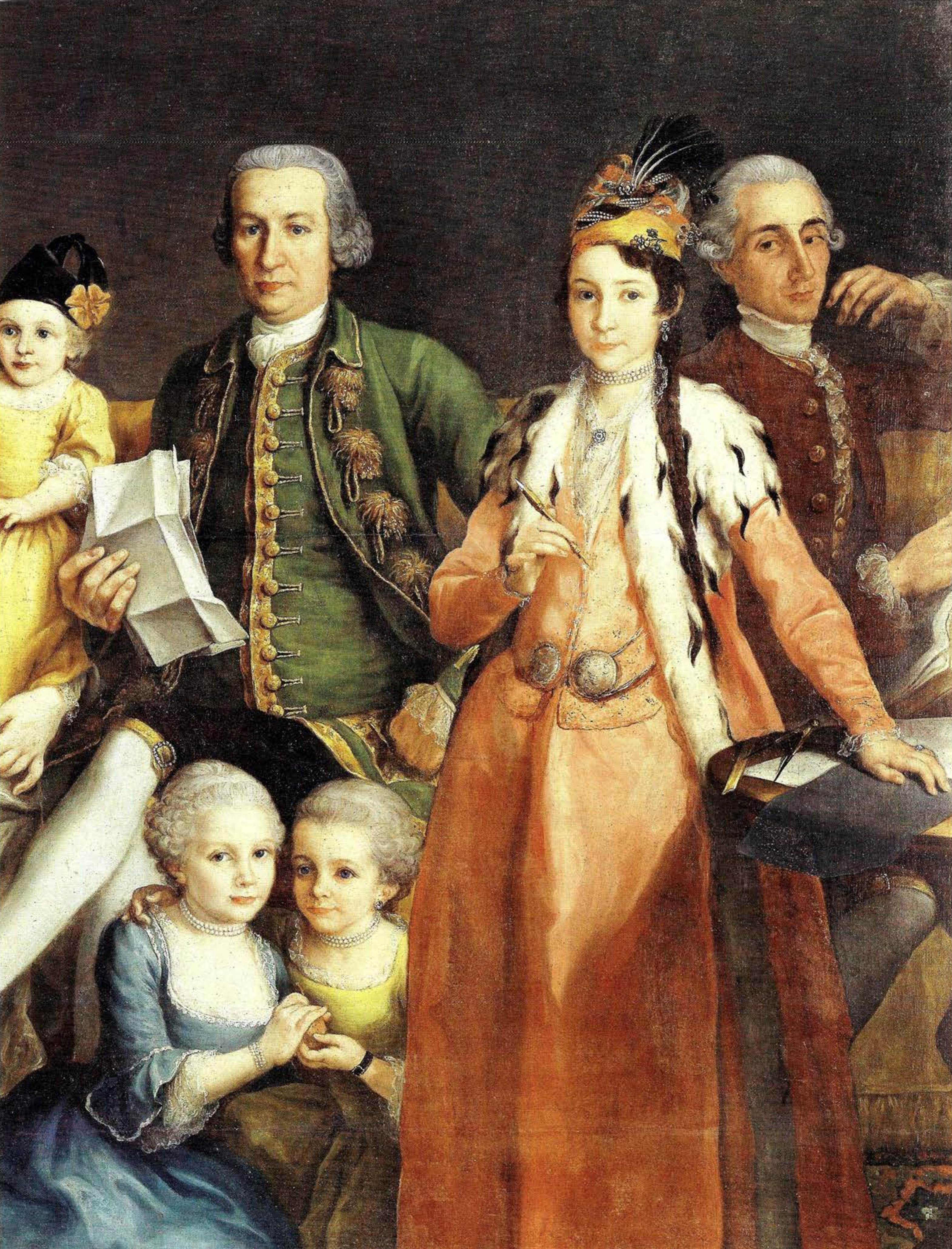


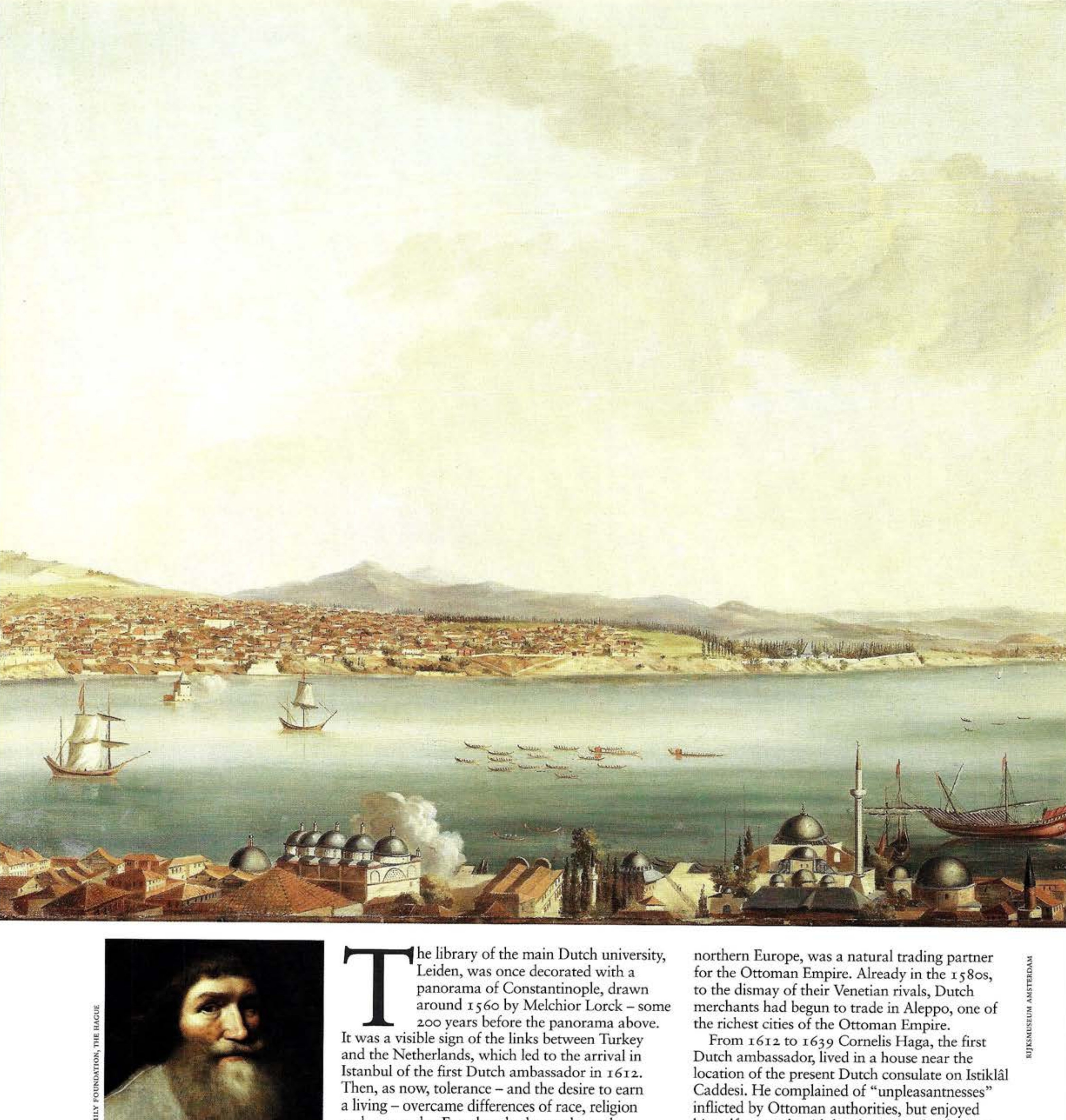
A Dutch treat

As Turkey and the Netherlands celebrate 400 years of fruitful trade with a series of spectacular exhibitions in both countries, Philip Mansel, author of a new history of the Levant, reflects on the curious role of the Dutch at the Sublime Porte. On page 58 Eveline Sint Nicolaas, curator at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, tells the story of Cornelis Calkoen, the colourful ambassador to Constantinople in its extravagant heyday

The van Lenneps of Smyrna, c1770 Antoine de Favray's portrait of the Izmir shipowner David George van Lennep surrounded by his family – described by a French nobleman as the happiest he had ever met

Rijksmuseum Amsterdam





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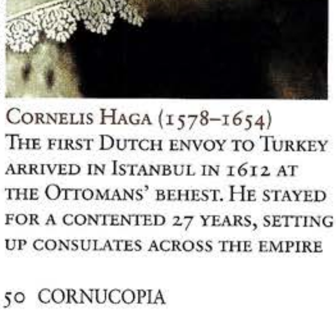


DE KEMPENEAR FAMILY FOUNDATION, THE HAGUE

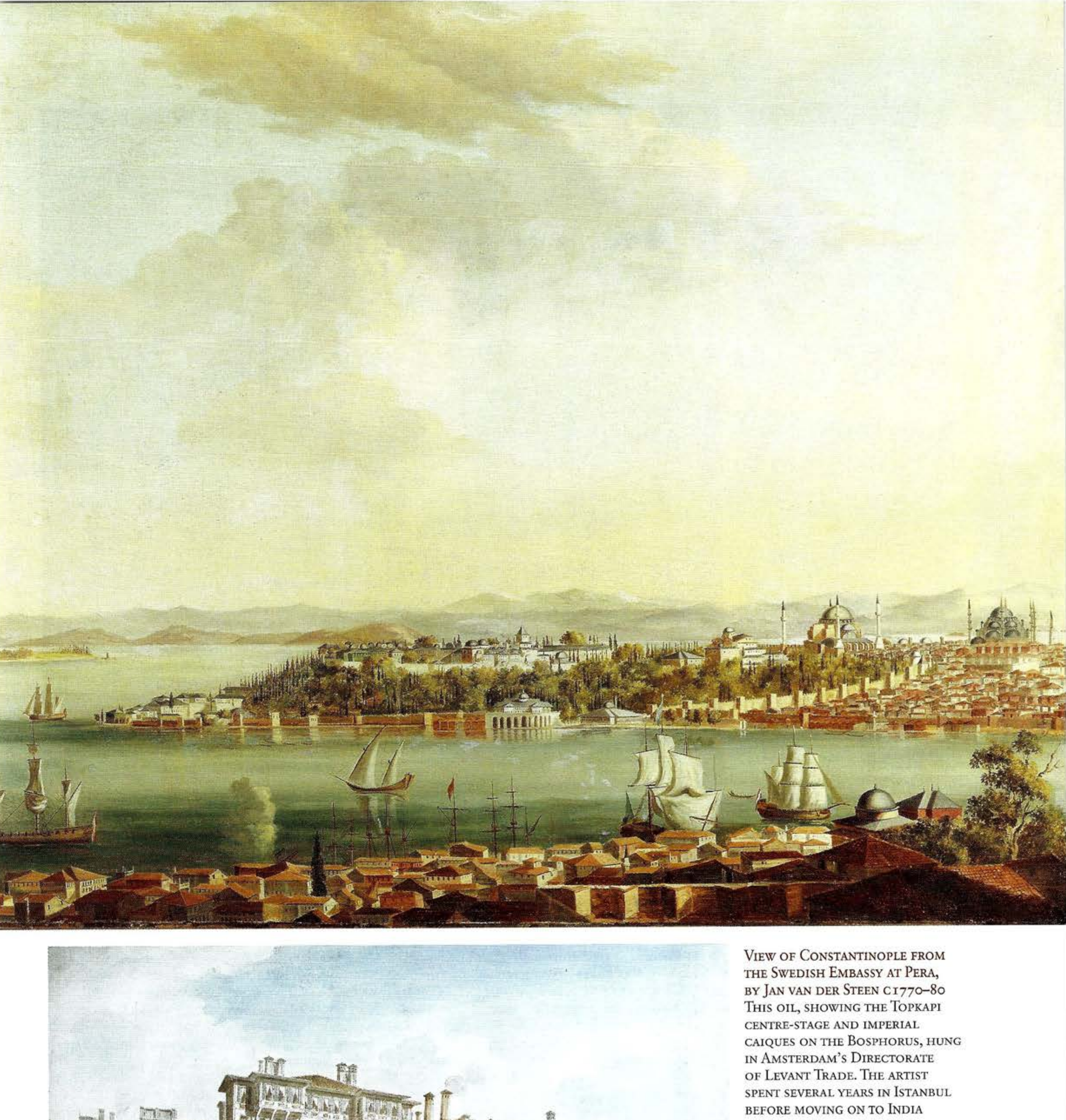
Cornelis Haga (1578–1654) The first Dutch envoy to Turkey arrived in Istanbul in 1612 at the Ottomans' behest. He stayed for a contented 27 years, setting up consulates across the empire

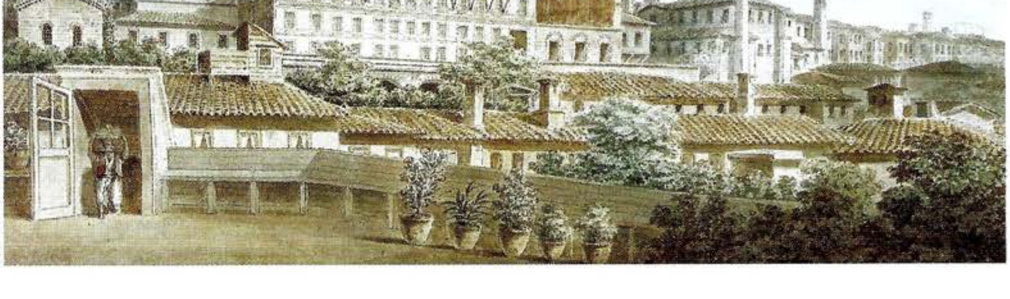
The library of the main Dutch university, Leiden, was once decorated with a panorama of Constantinople, drawn around 1560 by Melchior Lorck – some 200 years before the panorama above. It was a visible sign of the links between Turkey and the Netherlands, which led to the arrival in Istanbul of the first Dutch ambassador in 1612. Then, as now, tolerance – and the desire to earn a living – overcame differences of race, religion and geography. Four hundred years later, the Turkish–Dutch relationship is being celebrated in both countries in an explosion of exhibitions, publications and concerts.

Showing Turkey's constant desire for a role in Europe, official relations began in 1610 with a letter from the Kaptan Pasha, or head of the navy, inviting the States General of the Netherlands to send an ambassador to Istanbul. They shared the same enemy: Catholic crusading Spain. Moreover, the Netherlands, as the economic powerhouse of northern Europe, was a natural trading partner for the Ottoman Empire. Already in the 1580s, to the dismay of their Venetian rivals, Dutch merchants had begun to trade in Aleppo, one of the richest cities of the Ottoman Empire.

From 1612 to 1639 Cornelis Haga, the first Dutch ambassador, lived in a house near the location of the present Dutch consulate on Istiklâl Caddesi. He complained of "unpleasantnesses" inflicted by Ottoman authorities, but enjoyed himself so much with local women that he was called, by his English colleague Sir Thomas Roe, "the shame of ambassadors".

Unlike most European powers, the Netherlands had no desire to acquire Ottoman territory. Therefore its diplomats were trusted by the Ottoman government. More than others (except, on occasion, the French), they were used not only as sources of information about Europe – where before 1793 the Ottoman government had no permanent diplomats of its

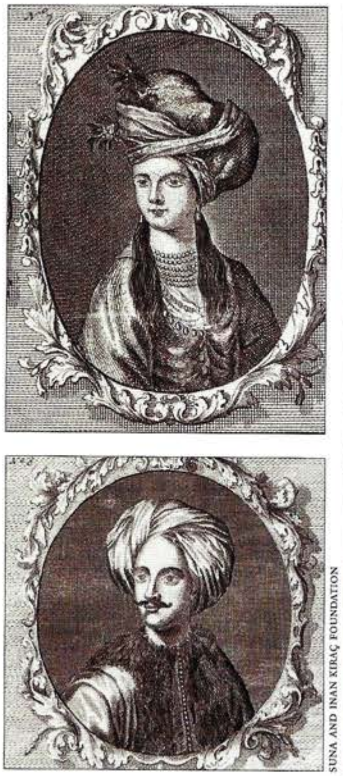




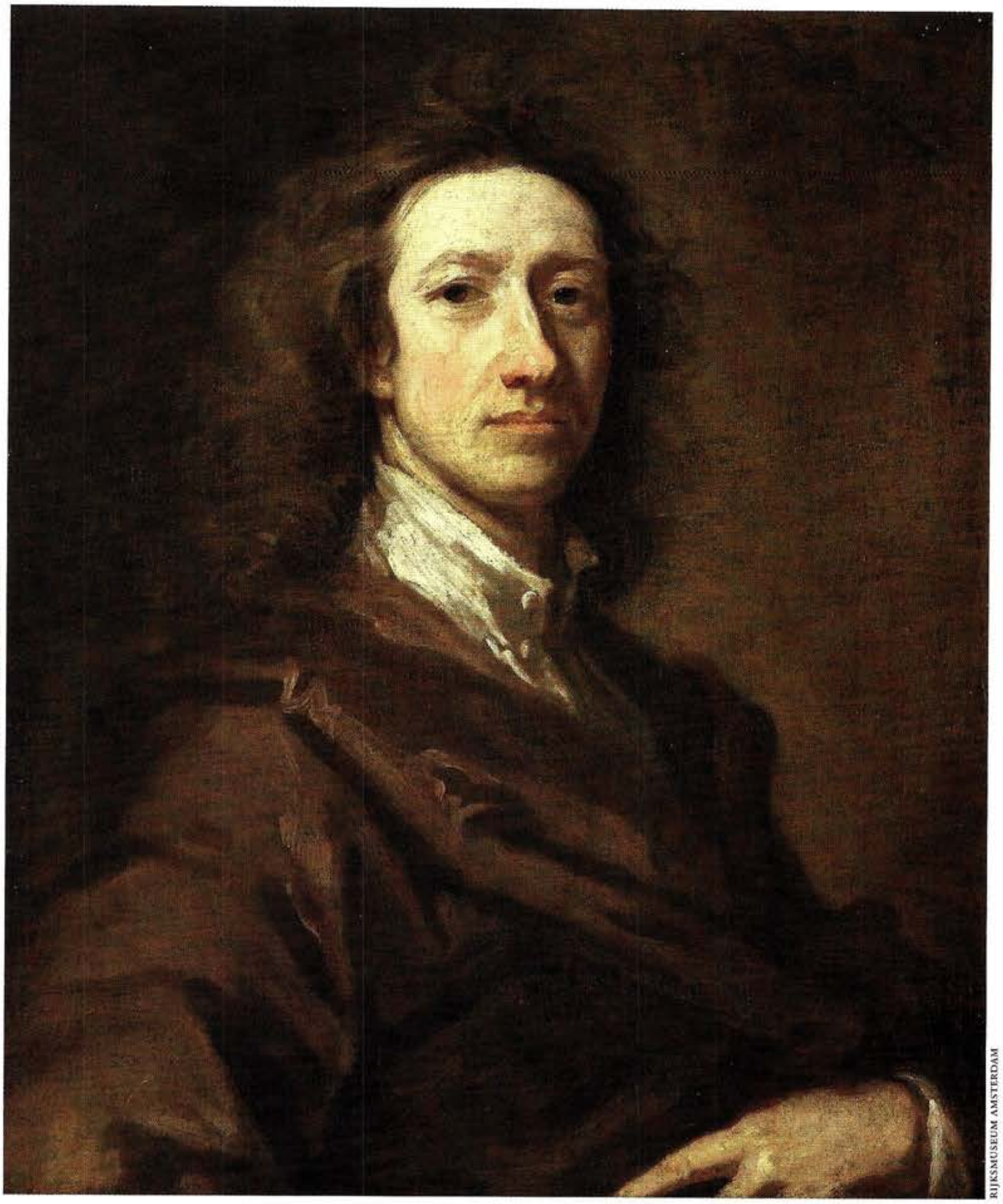
FONDATION CUSTODIA PARIS

VIEW OF CONSTANTINOPLE FROM THE SWEDISH EMBASSY AT PERA, BY JAN VAN DER STEEN C1770–80
THIS OIL, SHOWING THE TOPKAPI CENTRE-STAGE AND IMPERIAL CAIQUES ON THE BOSPHORUS, HUNG IN AMSTERDAM'S DIRECTORATE OF LEVANT TRADE. THE ARTIST SPENT SEVERAL YEARS IN ISTANBUL BEFORE MOVING ON TO INDIA

PALAIS DE HOLLANDE, 1818
THIS CLASSICAL WOODEN KONAK IN THE DIPLOMATIC QUARTER OF PERA HOUSED THE DUTCH EMBASSY. PROJECTING BAYS CAUGHT THE GLORIOUS VIEWS. THE BUILDING WAS DESTROYED WHEN FIRE SWEPT THROUGH PERA IN 1831. TODAY'S CONSULATE OCCUPIES THE SAME SITE



SUNA AND INAN KIRAÇ FOUNDATION



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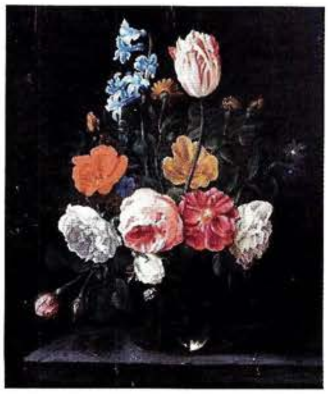
PORTRAITS OF THE EAST PAINTED (RIGHT) IN LONDON IN 1700 BY GODFREY KNELLER, THE LEADING PORTRAITIST OF THE TIME, DE BRUYN BECAME A LEGEND WITH HIS BOOK 'TRAVELS IN THE PRINCIPAL PARTS OF ASIA MINOR', ABOUT HIS LIFE IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE BETWEEN 1677 AND 1682. PUBLISHED IN DELFT IN 1698, ITS PORTRAITS OF TURBANED FIGURES (ABOVE) CAPTURED THE WESTERN IMAGINATION. DE BRUYN HAD FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES – WILLIAM OF ORANGE WAS ONE OF THE BOOK'S SUBSCRIBERS. HE WENT ON TO TRAVEL IN RUSSIA, PERSIA AND INDIA



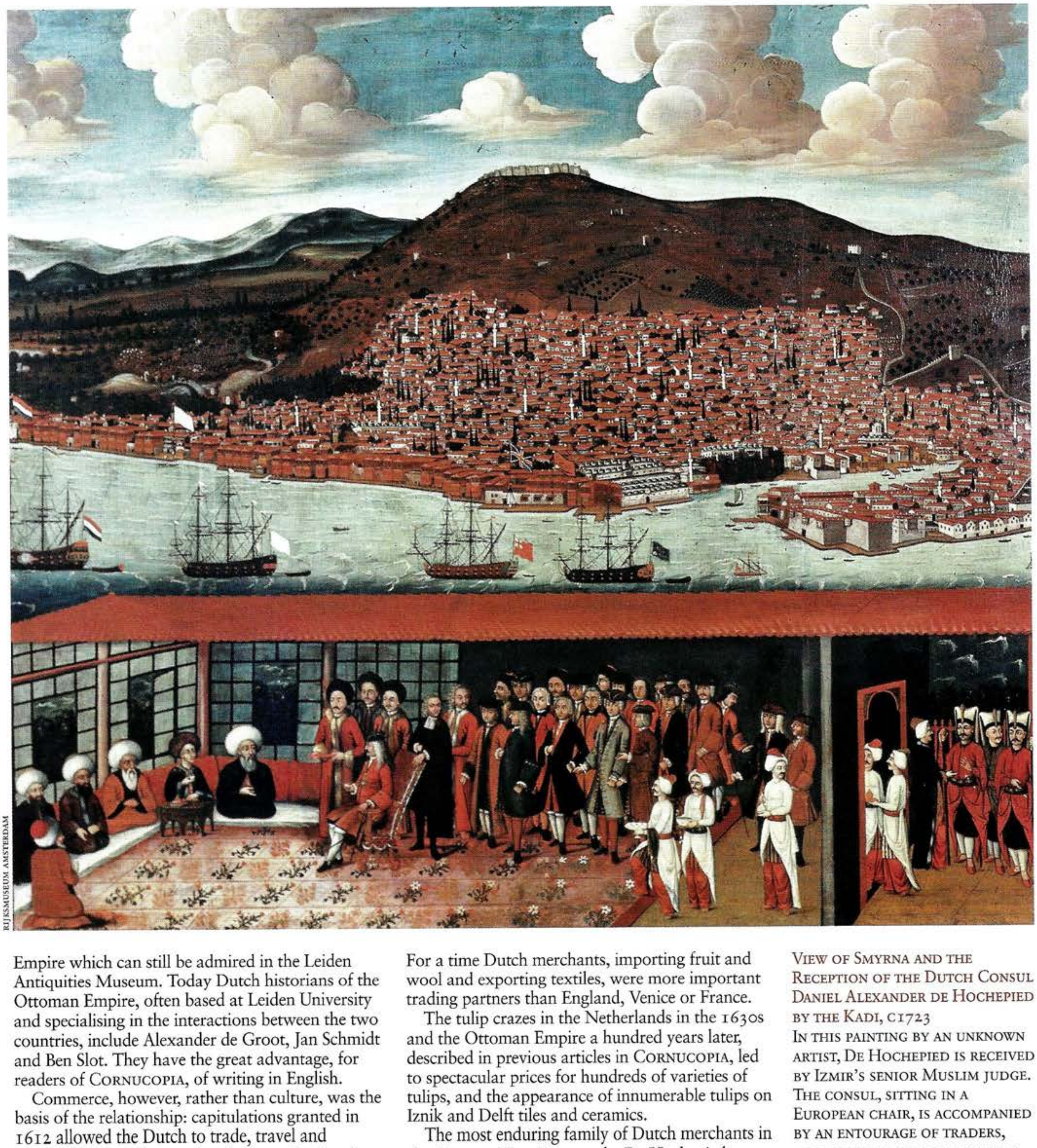
FLOWER POWER THE SPECIES IN THIS 17TH-CENTURY OIL BY NICOLAES VAN VEERENDAEL MOSTLY GROW WILD IN TURKEY, INCLUDING THE ALL-IMPORTANT TULIP

own – but also as mediators with other powers.

Succeeding his father – who had held the same position from 1668 to 1682 – Jacob, Count Colyer, served as Dutch ambassador in Istanbul from 1683 until his death there in 1725. Like most Dutch diplomats, he had many Ottoman friends and, thanks to the quantities of wine he served them as well as his excellent Turkish and Greek, was said to learn all the secrets of the Sublime Porte. He helped the Ottoman Empire conduct peace negotiations with the Holy Roman Empire at Karlowitz in 1699.

The next Dutch ambassador, Cornelis Calkoen, also acted as a mediator between the Holy Roman and the Ottoman Empires when they made peace in 1739. Calkoen assembled a collection of 65 pictures of Istanbul and its people by Jean-Baptiste Vanmour (who, like Jacob Colyer, lived in Istanbul for nearly 40 years), described in this issue by Eveline Sint Nicolaas. As an artistic commemoration of an Istanbul embassy, Calkoen's collection rivals the magnificent picture collections of the Celsing brothers (Swedish ambassadors in the mid-18th century) at Biby in Sweden – and the lost collection of Charles Gravier, comte de Vergennes (French ambassador from 1755 to 1768). No other capital was so important and so colourful; no other capital inspired so many ambassadors to commission so many pictures of it.

Like the Netherlands Research Institute in Istanbul today, the Dutch embassy also acted as a haven for scholars. They included Jacobus Golius and Levinus Warner (Dutch ambassador from 1654 to 1665), who began Leiden University's collection of Oriental manuscripts; the Dutch traveller Cornelis de Bruyn, whose magnificent illustrated book about his travels in the Ottoman Empire between 1677 and 1682 was published in Delft in 1698 and translated into French as *Voyage au Levant* in 1700; and another traveller, Pieter van Woensel, who admired the Ottoman Empire but considered it doomed. Until 1914 Dutch merchants and travellers sent back antiquities, coins and medals from the Ottoman


RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM

Empire which can still be admired in the Leiden Antiquities Museum. Today Dutch historians of the Ottoman Empire, often based at Leiden University and specialising in the interactions between the two countries, include Alexander de Groot, Jan Schmidt and Ben Slot. They have the great advantage, for readers of CORNUCOPIA, of writing in English.

Commerce, however, rather than culture, was the basis of the relationship: capitulations granted in 1612 allowed the Dutch to trade, travel and worship freely in the empire; for years the Dutch ambassador, like his English colleague, would be paid by his country's Levant company as well as by his government. Worship was freer in the Ottoman Empire than in "tolerant" Holland, where Catholics had to use "secret" churches hidden from the street.

From the 1620s Dutch merchants helped transform Izmir into an international entrepôt: at about the same time, across the Atlantic Ocean, Dutch merchants were performing a similar role for New Amsterdam (as New York was then called). For a time Dutch merchants, importing fruit and wool and exporting textiles, were more important trading partners than England, Venice or France.

The tulip crazes in the Netherlands in the 1630s and the Ottoman Empire a hundred years later, described in previous articles in CORNUCOPIA, led to spectacular prices for hundreds of varieties of tulips, and the appearance of innumerable tulips on Iznik and Delft tiles and ceramics.

The most enduring family of Dutch merchants in the Ottoman Empire were the De Hochepieds. Daniel Jean de Hochepied arrived in Izmir from Amsterdam in 1677. He married Count Colyer's daughter, and from 1687 to 1723 served as Dutch consul in Izmir, where his collection of ancient coins and medals became celebrated. A marvellous picture from 1724, now in the collection of the Rijksmuseum, shows the audience of his son Daniel Alexander de Hochepied, Dutch consul in Izmir from 1724 to 1759, with the Kadi of Izmir, in front of a panorama of the city. He was made a baron by

VIEW OF SMYRNA AND THE RECEPTION OF THE DUTCH CONSUL DANIEL ALEXANDER DE HOCHEPIED BY THE KADI, C1723

IN THIS PAINTING BY AN UNKNOWN ARTIST, DE HOCHEPIED IS RECEIVED BY IZMIR'S SENIOR MUSLIM JUDGE. THE CONSUL, SITTING IN A EUROPEAN CHAIR, IS ACCOMPANIED BY AN ENTOURAGE OF TRADERS, A PRIEST AND THREE DRAGOMANS. BEYOND, MOORED IN THE BAY OF IZMIR, ARE MERCHANTMEN FLYING THE FLAGS OF VARIOUS NATIONS TRADING WITH THE CITY. DE HOCHEPIED'S FATHER HAD SETTLED THERE IN 1677, AND A DE HOCHEPIED WAS CONSUL-GENERAL IN ISTANBUL UNTIL 1957

Opposite, top Levant merchants visiting Amsterdam in the 17th century would put up in the famous tavern on the Oudezijds canal seen on the right of this painting by Gerrit Berckheyde, c1675. Robert Bargrave of Canterbury, who made the perilous journey overland from Istanbul in 1653, described it as 'the noblest Taverne in the world'

Opposite, below: Ankara's mohair market This detail of an 18th-century painting of Ankara in the Directorate of Levant Trade (see page 84) shows a departing caravan. In the foreground, Angora goats are being shorn of their precious fleece. The Dutch had cornered the mohair market

Below: the Bosphorus, 1770–80 An 1810 inventory of paintings in the directorate lists Jan van der Steen's sea views; most of the paintings on the walls of the chamber were gifts from envoys or consuls

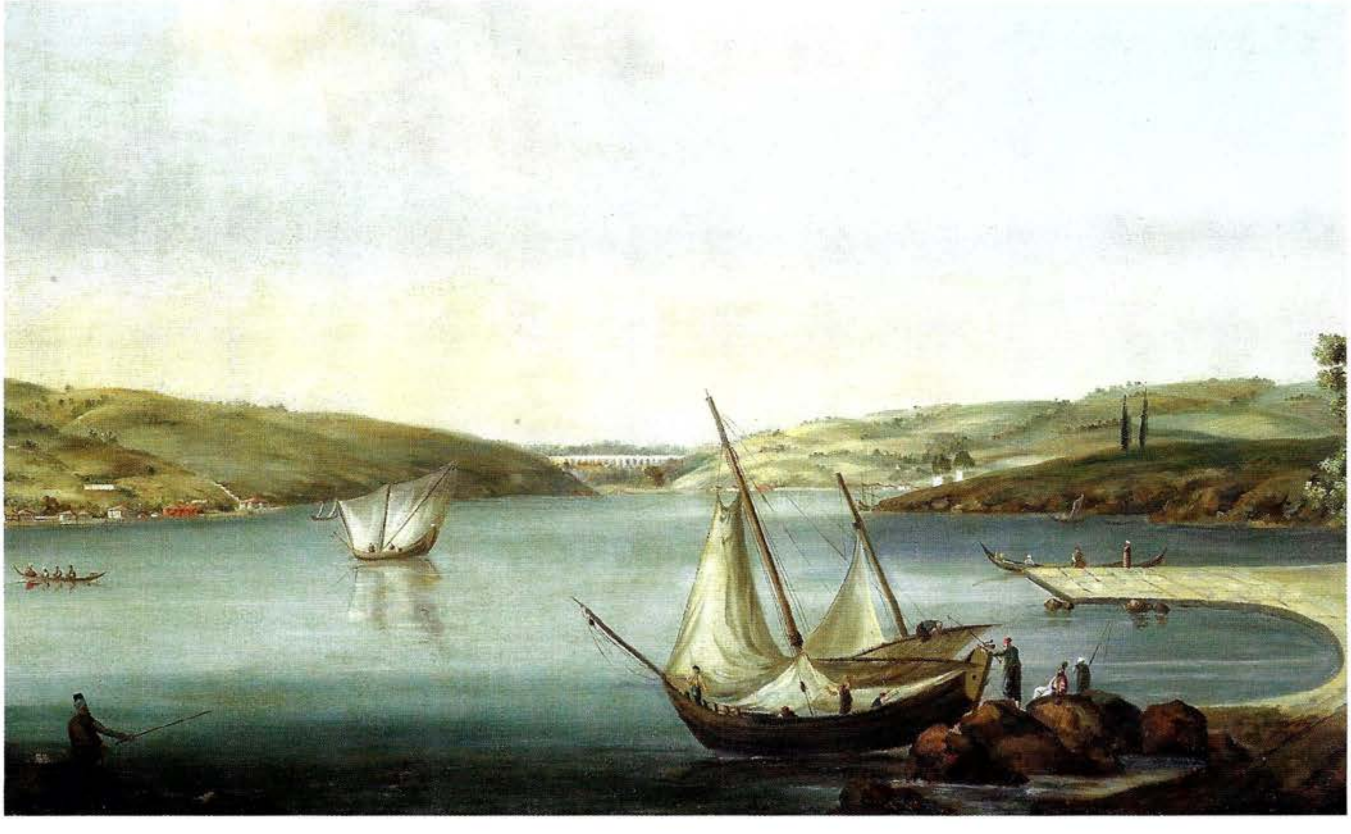
the Holy Roman Emperor as a reward for the number of Christian slaves he bought and released. Another De Hochepied, Catherine, married the Swedish ambassador, Count Heidenstam, and in 1786 in the Swedish embassy acted in *l'Ecole des Jaloux*, one of the first operas performed in Istanbul. The De Hochepieds continued to live in Izmir until the 1920s. The last of the family, Daniël Jacques Edmond, Count de Hochepied, served as Dutch vice-consul in Izmir from 1912 to 1932 and as consul-general in Istanbul from 1947 to 1957. An edition of De Hochepied family letters from Turkey, between 1677 and 1956, deserves to be published.

Other prominent Dutch merchant families of Izmir, also living there for several centuries, were the Keuns, De Jonghs, Dutilhs, Van der Zees and Van Lenneps. Born in Amsterdam in 1712, David George van Lennep arrived in Izmir in 1731 and became a wealthy shipowner, banker and merchant. A famous portrait of around 1770 by Antoine de Favray, seen on page 48, shows Van Lennep surrounded by his family – described by a French officer, Count Mathieu Dumas, as the happiest he had ever met. On the far left is his father-in-law, Justin Leydstar, a Dutch merchant of Ankara. Of the two girls in the foreground, one married the Comte de Chabannes, the other Admiral Waldegrave. Elizabeth Clara, standing on the right, married the Smyrna merchant Isaac Morier and was mother of James Morier, author of the English classic of Persian life, *Hadji Baba of Isfahan*. Thus, thanks to the accessibility of the Ottoman Empire, one picture links Izmir, Ankara, Amsterdam, London, Paris and Isfahan.

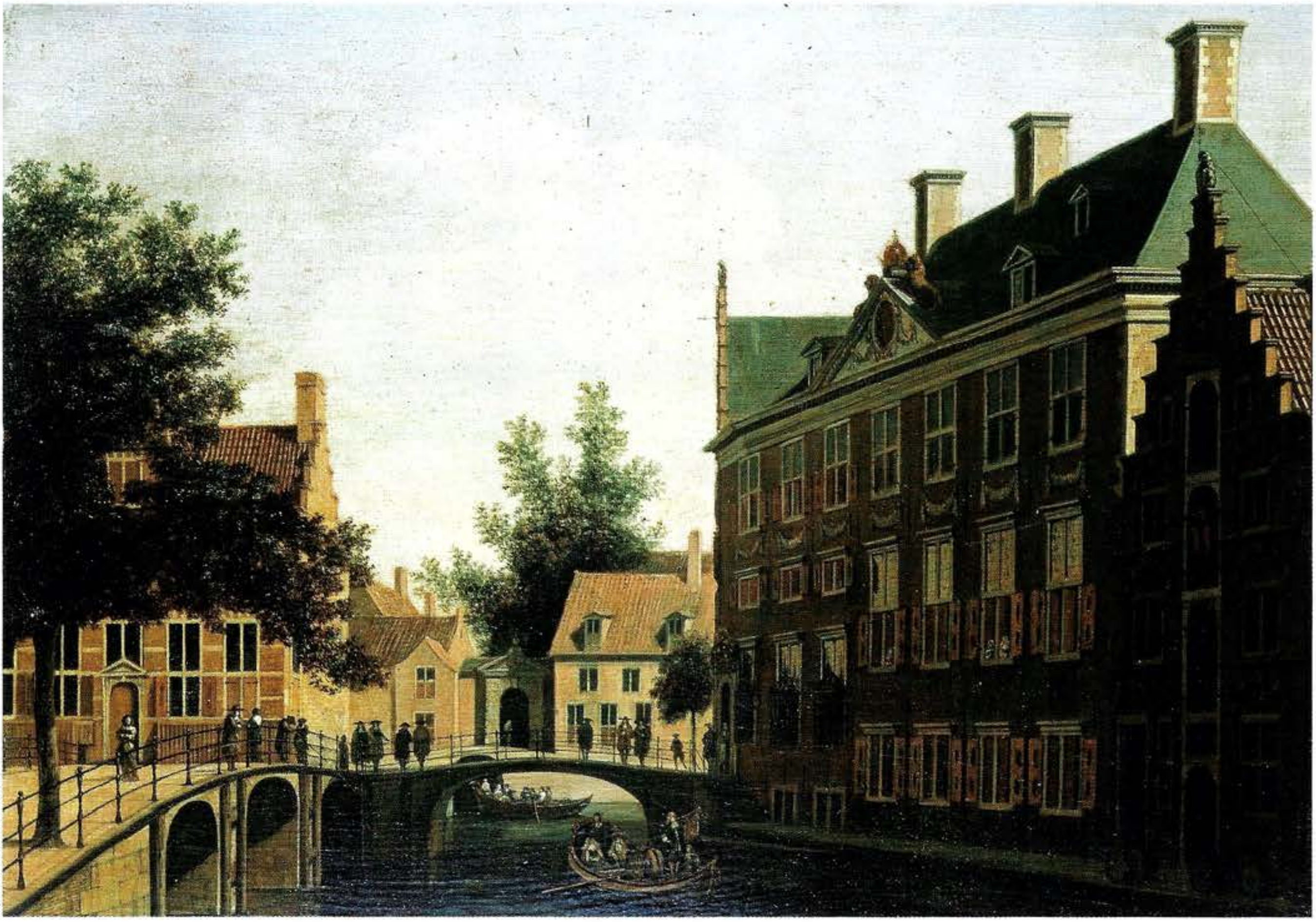
The last time a Dutch ambassador acted as mediator between the Ottoman Empire and European powers was in 1828–9, when Count van Zuylen represented the interests of Britain, France and Russia in Istanbul while their ambassadors withdrew out of sympathy for the Greek struggle for independence. He was helped by his dragoman, Gaspard de Testa, from a famous family of interpreters who had lived in Pera since before the Ottoman conquest. Dutch firms continued to trade in Izmir. Opium from Anatolia, for example, was exported in vast quantities to the Dutch colonies in Indonesia. Even women and maidservants speculated in it.

Since the fire of 1922, fewer Dutch merchants have lived in Izmir. The Van Lenneps, for example, moved to the Netherlands and the USA. In contrast, since a labour agreement signed by the two governments in 1964, thousands of Turks have gone to work in the Netherlands. There were never more than a few hundred Dutch living in Turkey; now about half a million Turks are living in the Netherlands, many of whom have kept Turkish nationality. Famous Turkish Dutch include the writer Sadık Yemni, the politician Nebahat Albayrak and the boxer Gökhan Saki. The two countries are also Nato allies. The flourishing multidimensional relationship between Turkey and the Netherlands, like that between Turkey and Britain or France, shows for how long, and on how many different levels, Turkey has been part of Europe. ◆

Philip Mansel's latest book is 'Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean – A history of Smyrna, Alexandria and Beirut' (John Murray). He is also the author of 'Constantinople: City of the World's Desire 1453–1924' (John Murray) and 'Sultans in Splendour: Monarchs of the Middle East 1869–1945' (Parkway). All available from cornucopia.net. All three are published in Turkish by Everest.



Rijksmuseum Amsterdam



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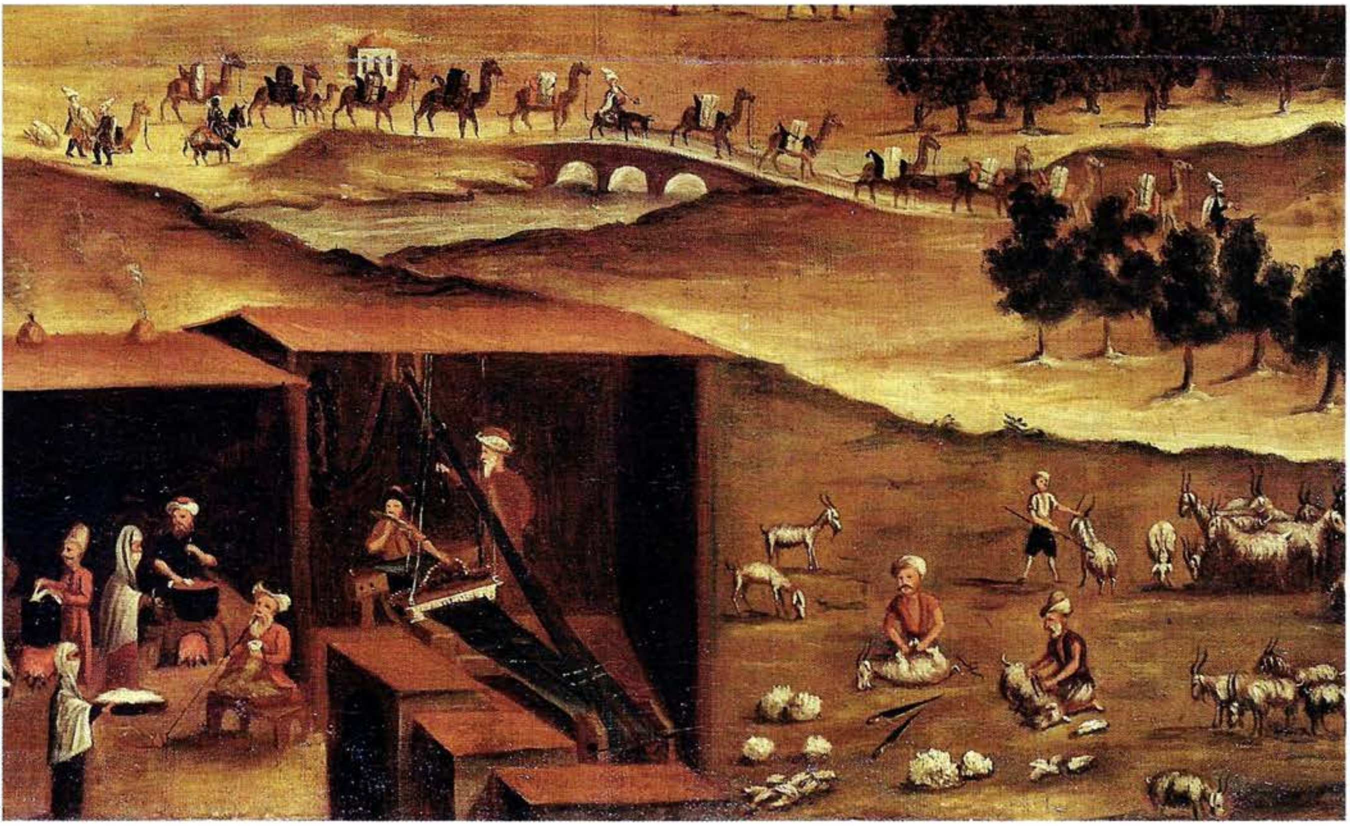

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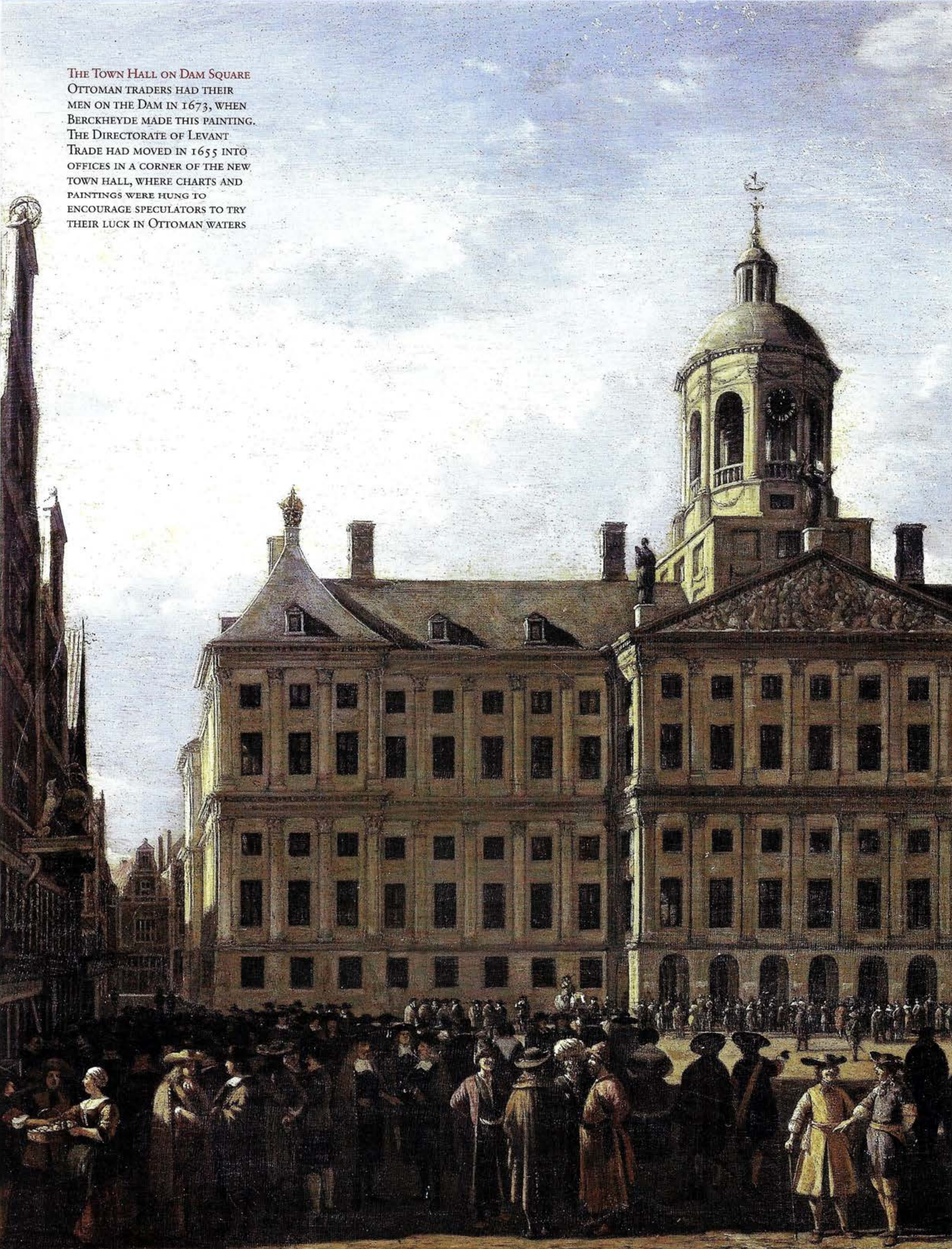
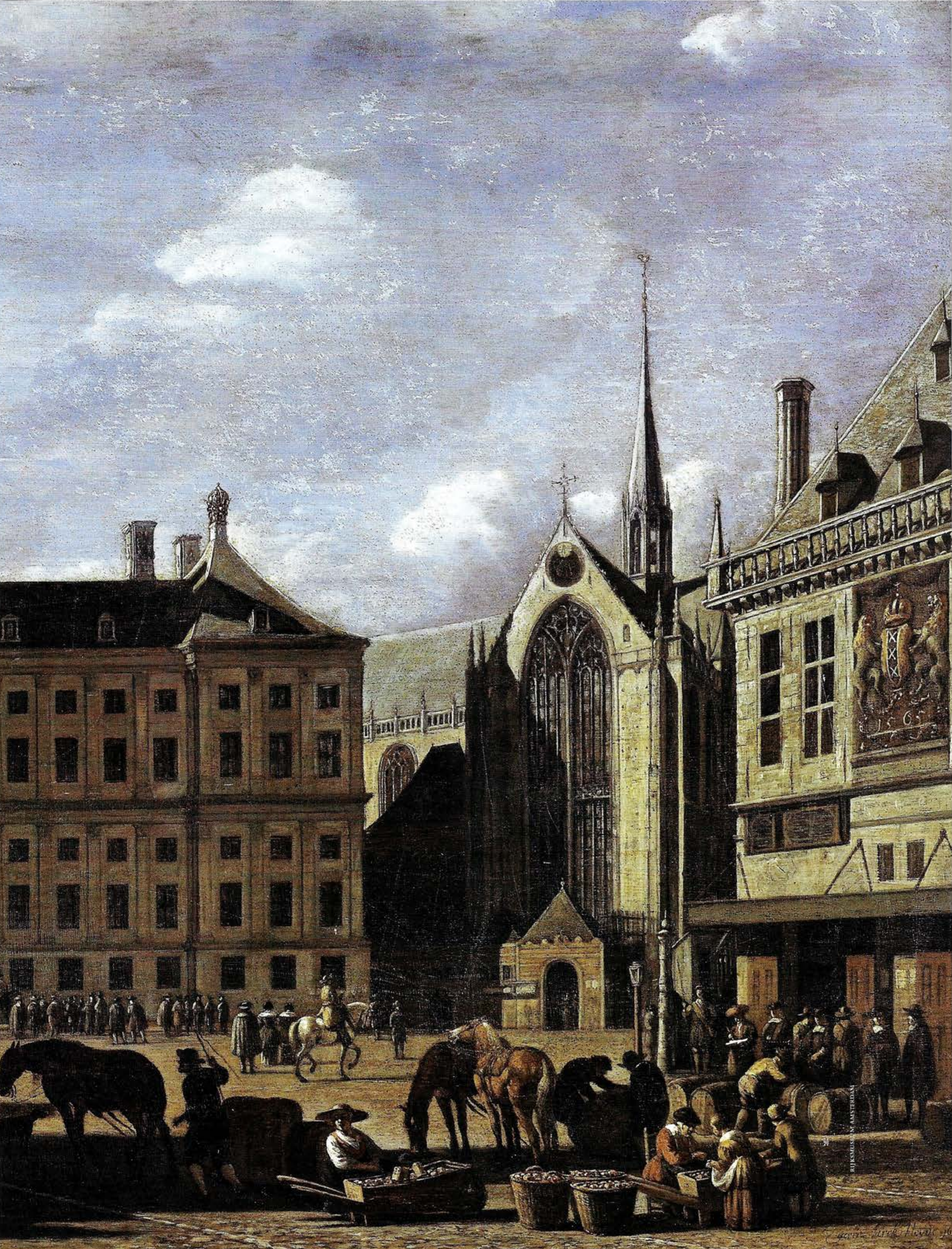


The Town Hall on Dam Square

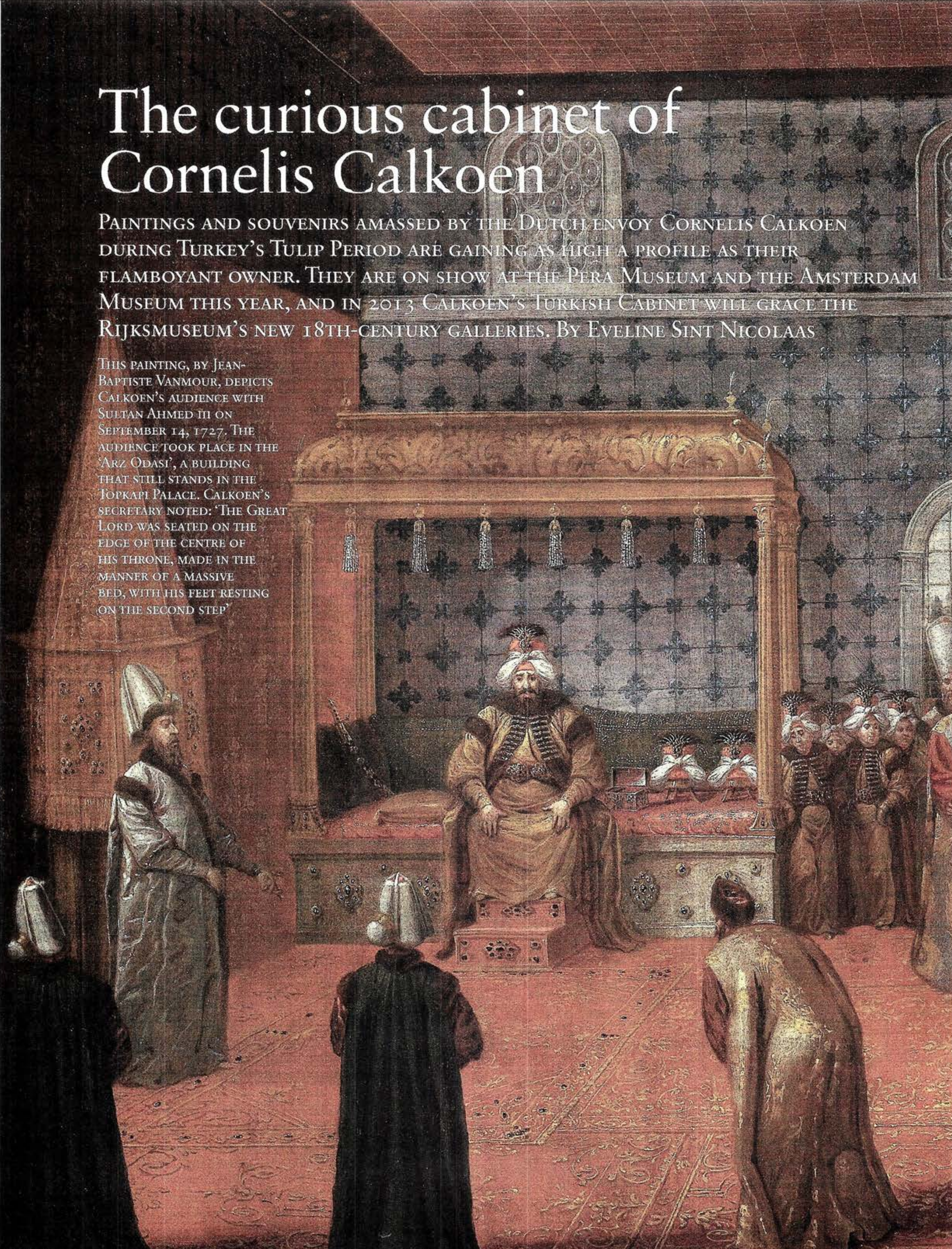
Ottoman traders had their men on the Dam in 1673, when Berckheyde made this painting. The Directorate of Levant Trade had moved in 1655 into offices in a corner of the new town hall, where charts and paintings were hung to encourage speculators to try their luck in Ottoman waters



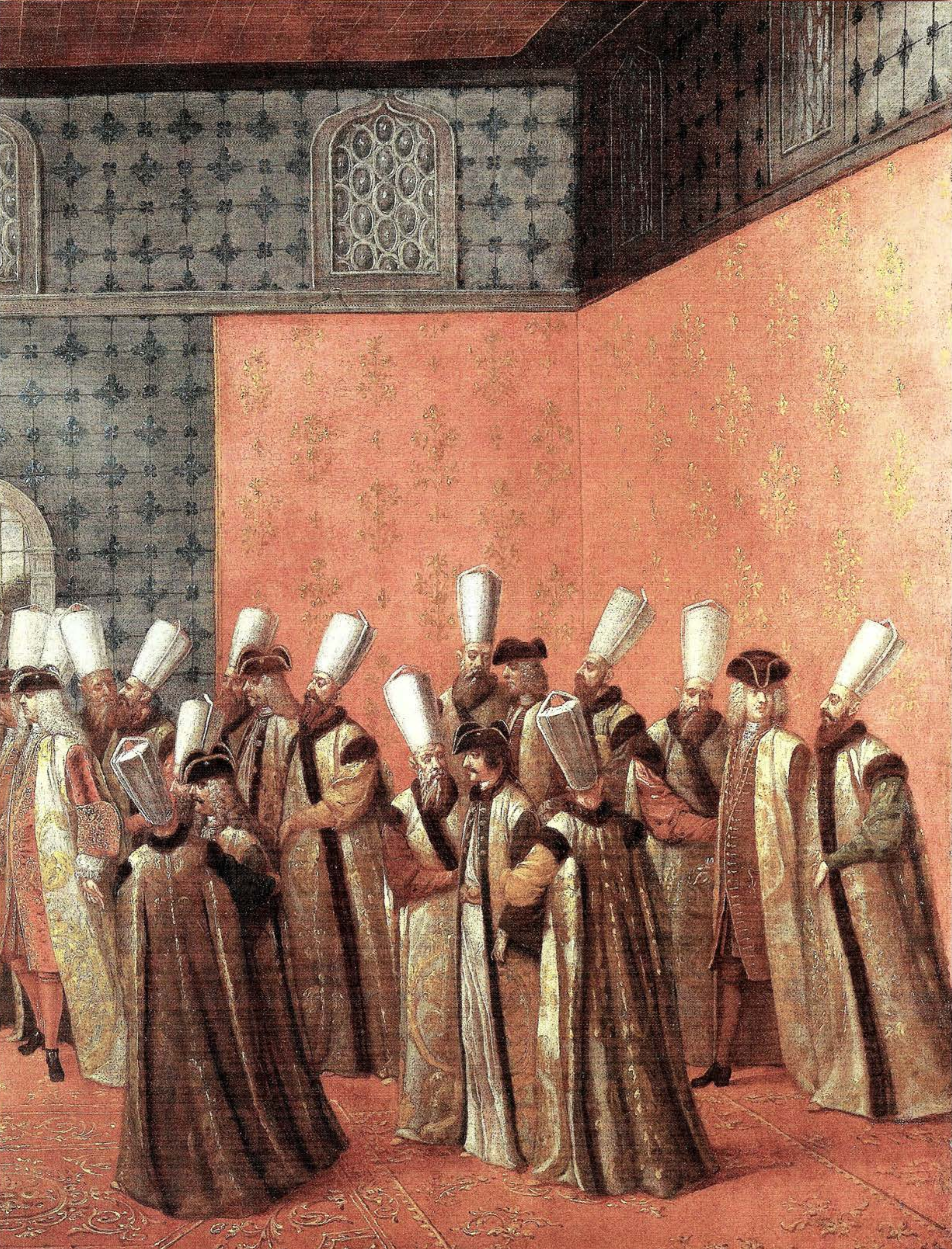
RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM

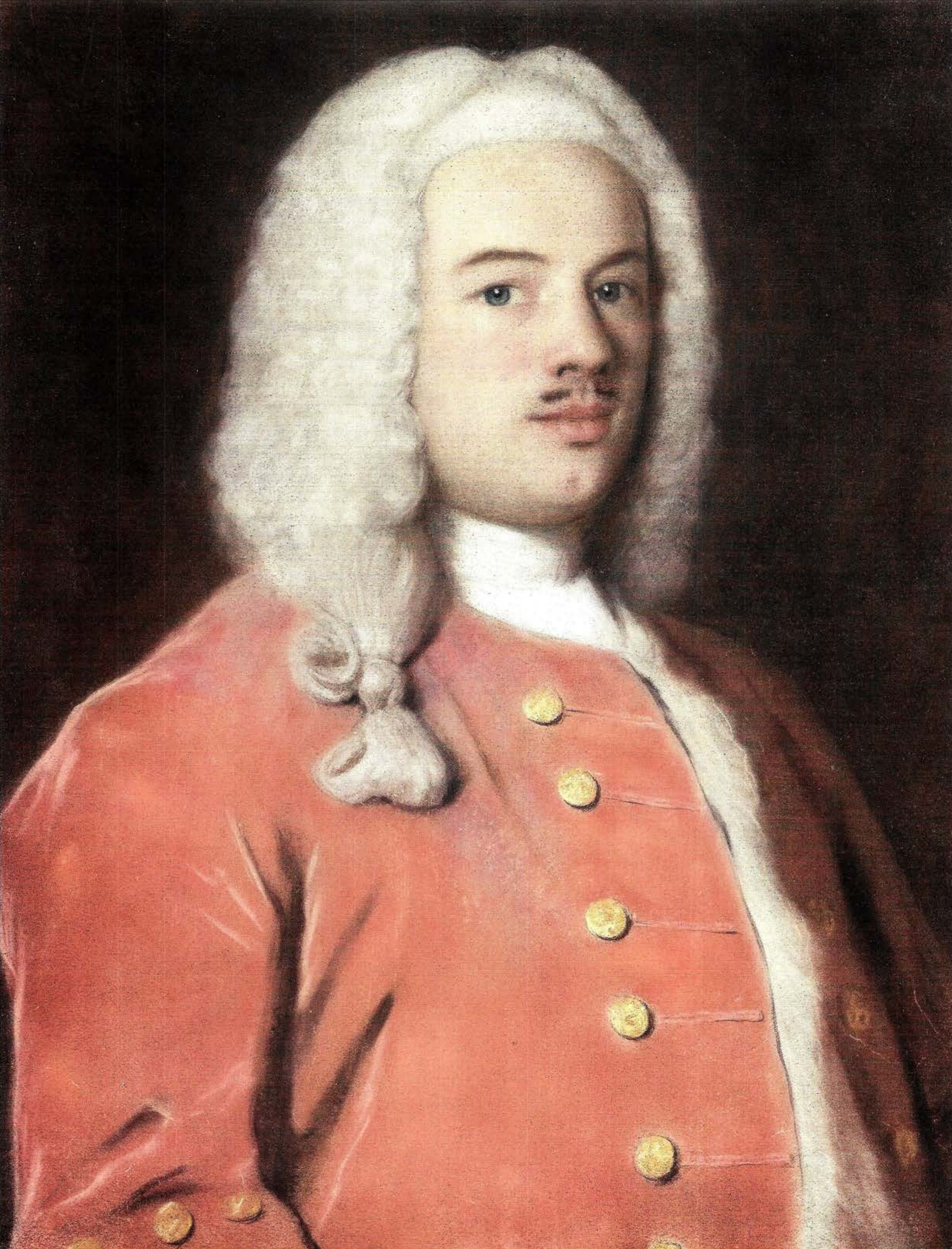
The curious cabinet of Cornelis Calkoen

Paintings and souvenirs amassed by the Dutch envoy Cornelis Calkoen during Turkey's Tulip Period are gaining as high a profile as their flamboyant owner. They are on show at the Pera Museum and the Amsterdam Museum this year, and in 2013 Calkoen's Turkish Cabinet will grace the Rijksmuseum's new 18th-century galleries. By Eveline Sint Nicolaas



This painting, by Jean-Baptiste Vanmour, depicts Calkoen's audience with Sultan Ahmed III on September 14, 1727. The audience took place in the 'Arz Odasi', a building that still stands in the Topkapi Palace. Calkoen's secretary noted: 'The Great Lord was seated on the edge of the centre of his throne, made in the manner of a massive bed, with his feet resting on the second step'





When Calkoen presented his credentials to Sultan Ahmed III at the Topkapı on September 14, 1727, he had the important moment captured by the artist Jean-Baptiste Vanmour

Opposite: Cornelis Calkoen, by Jean-Etienne Liotard, 1738–42
Liotard produced countless drawings in the four years he lived in Istanbul, including this pastel portrait of Calkoen. On his return home, the Swiss artist presented himself as the 'peintre turc', and launched a highly successful career, fêted at Europe's leading courts

When Amsterdam's renovated Rijksmuseum reopens in 2013, the public will be able to visit the Turkish Cabinet of Cornelis Calkoen, the Dutch republic's ambassador to Istanbul from 1727 to 1744. For more than a century now the museum has been the keeper of his collection of paintings. More recently the ambassador's portrait and a group of beautiful personal belongings from his days in Istanbul were added to the collection.

Calkoen was 30 when he was appointed ambassador to Istanbul. He arrived with no diplomatic experience, though he had served in administrative posts before. The Calkoen family had been involved in the Levant trade for generations, and as ambassador it was Cornelis's job to protect and stimulate that trade. This aspect of his work was so important that part of his salary was paid by the Directorate of Levant Trade.

The directorate had been established in 1625 and comprised a board of seven directors and prominent merchants, with an office in the town hall in Amsterdam. Its task was to control and regulate. For example, the pirates of the Barbary coast – especially in the region of today's Algeria and Tunisia – were a constant threat to Dutch shipping. To ensure ships were adequately defended, the directorate stipulated a minimum number of guns and crew. Calkoen regularly reported back to the directorate during his time in Istanbul. With relatives on the board, the distance was less of a problem, and indeed Cornelis was able to use his connections to advantage on occasion.

When Calkoen presented his credentials to Sultan Ahmed III at the Topkapı Palace on September 14, 1727, he had the important moment captured by the artist Jean-Baptiste Vanmour. In a series of three canvases, Vanmour recorded the highlights of that auspicious day, just as a modern photographer might on a similar occasion. Vanmour had already been working in Istanbul for 30 years by the time Calkoen arrived, and had accompanied many ambassadors to audiences. The Dutch ambassador was to be one of his more lucrative patrons. Besides commissioning Vanmour to record his audience, Calkoen was to buy numerous genre paintings from the artist depicting the everyday life of Turks, Greeks and Armenians, as well as topographical paintings, portraits of court officials and a series of costume paintings. In this, Calkoen differed considerably from his fellow ambassadors, who generally made do with an audience painting and perhaps one or two genre pieces. When Vanmour died in Istanbul in 1737, an article appeared in the *Mercure de France* specifically naming Calkoen's collection as being without rival: *"M. Calkoen, Ambassadeur de Hollande à la Porte, en a un très grand nombre et des plus beaux [tableaux]."*

All the foreign envoys resided in the diplomatic district of Pera (today's Beyoğlu), on the northern shore of the Golden Horn. The Palais de Hollande, Cornelis Calkoen's residence, was also located here. While we unfortunately have no precise description of the palace, it is known to have been a wooden structure over a brick basement gallery, a common construction for houses in the Levant. Calkoen seemed to have liked living in Istanbul and described his new house to a female friend at home: *"Située d'une manière charmante. Le piano nobile est trop grand pour mon usage, parce qu'il est divisé selon l'usage de ce pais en appartements des femmes et des hommes… j'occupe celui des femmes, mais pour mon malheur je l'occupe seul."*

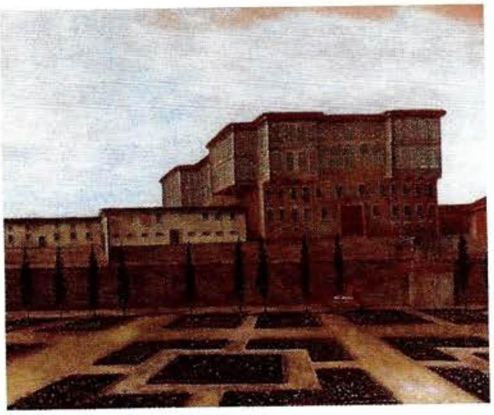
In Calkoen's day the embassy housed a staff of 40. They had to be fed daily, and 25 of them received new livery each year. The ambassador complained regularly about the cost of running the embassy, particularly since he only received partial compensation from the Dutch government. Calkoen's superiors were shocked by his expenses – they considered his costs excessive and too profligate for the national budget.

To augment his income, the ambassador bought diamonds, which he sold either rough or polished and set as jewels. Istanbul was a major centre of the diamond trade in the 18th century, and the stones were imported by Dutch East India Company (VOC) ships from India to Istanbul and went from there to Europe. The archives of the Calkoen family contain several documents that relate to this diamond trade. In March 1743 Cornelis pays a certain Mustapha to use his barque to go to the other side of the Golden Horn to buy diamonds. A Jewish diamond merchant takes care of cutting the stones, while a certain Ismail makes jewellery. It is possible that he acquired the superb ring illustrated here through his private trade. We do not know if he had the ring made for

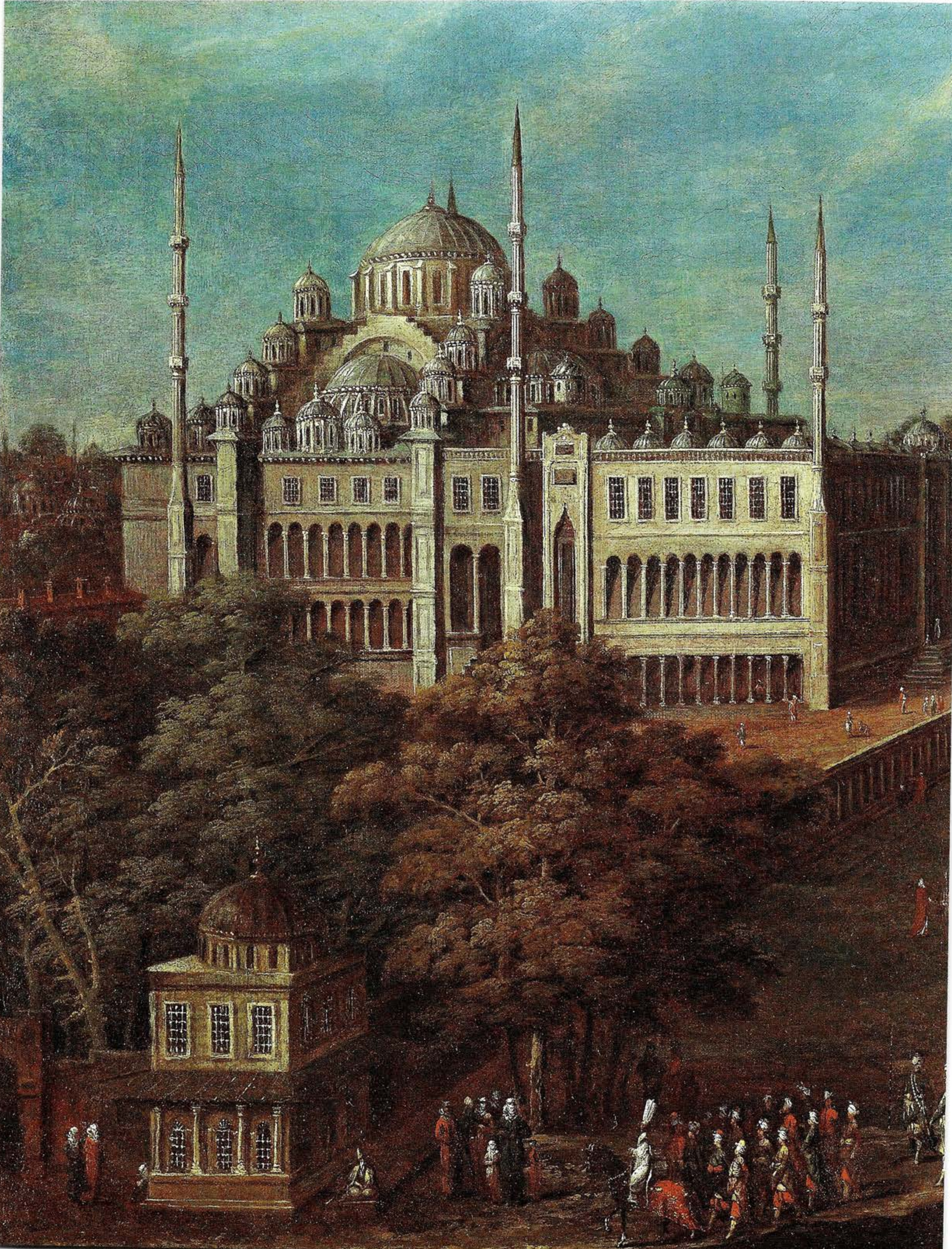
(continued on page 70)

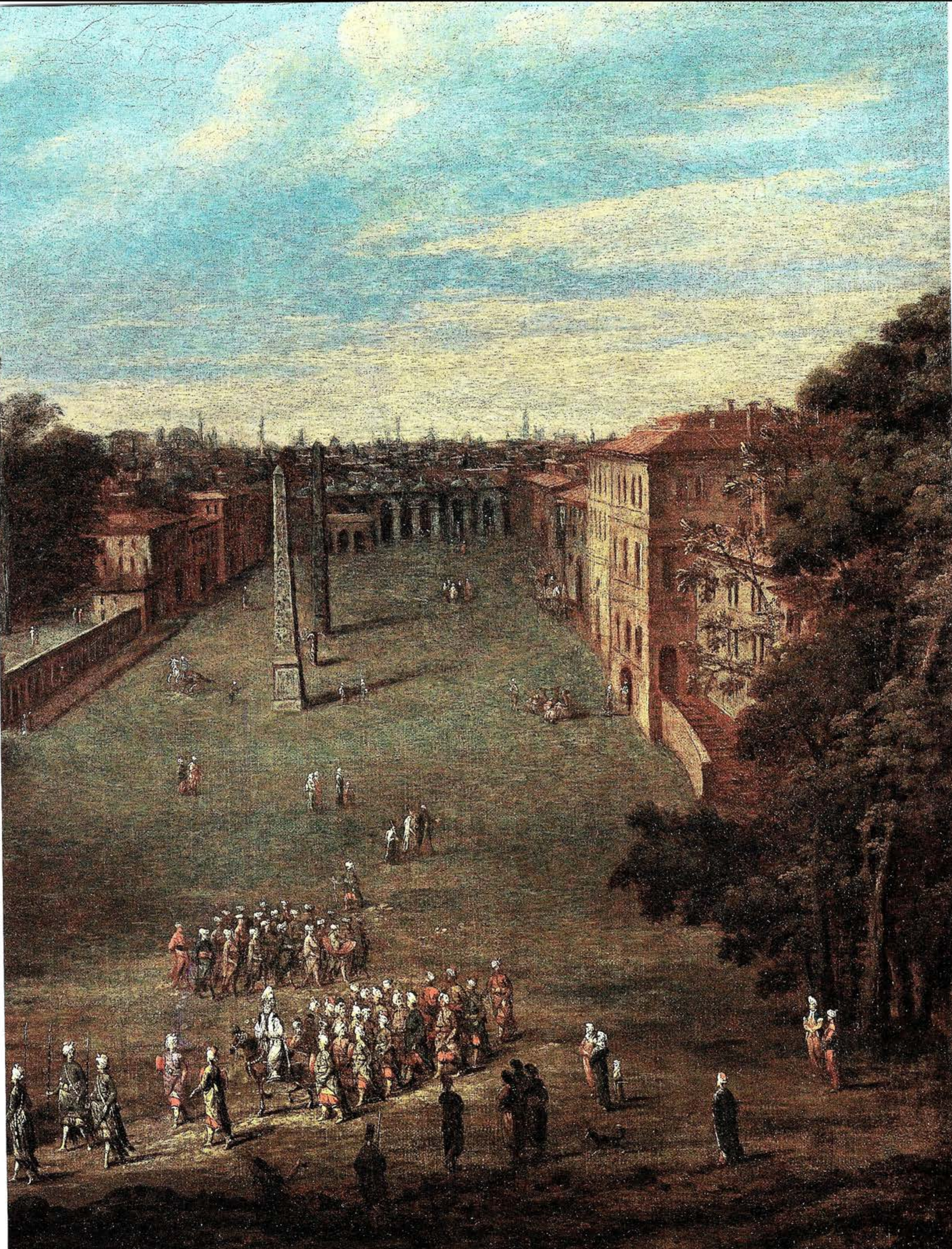
RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM

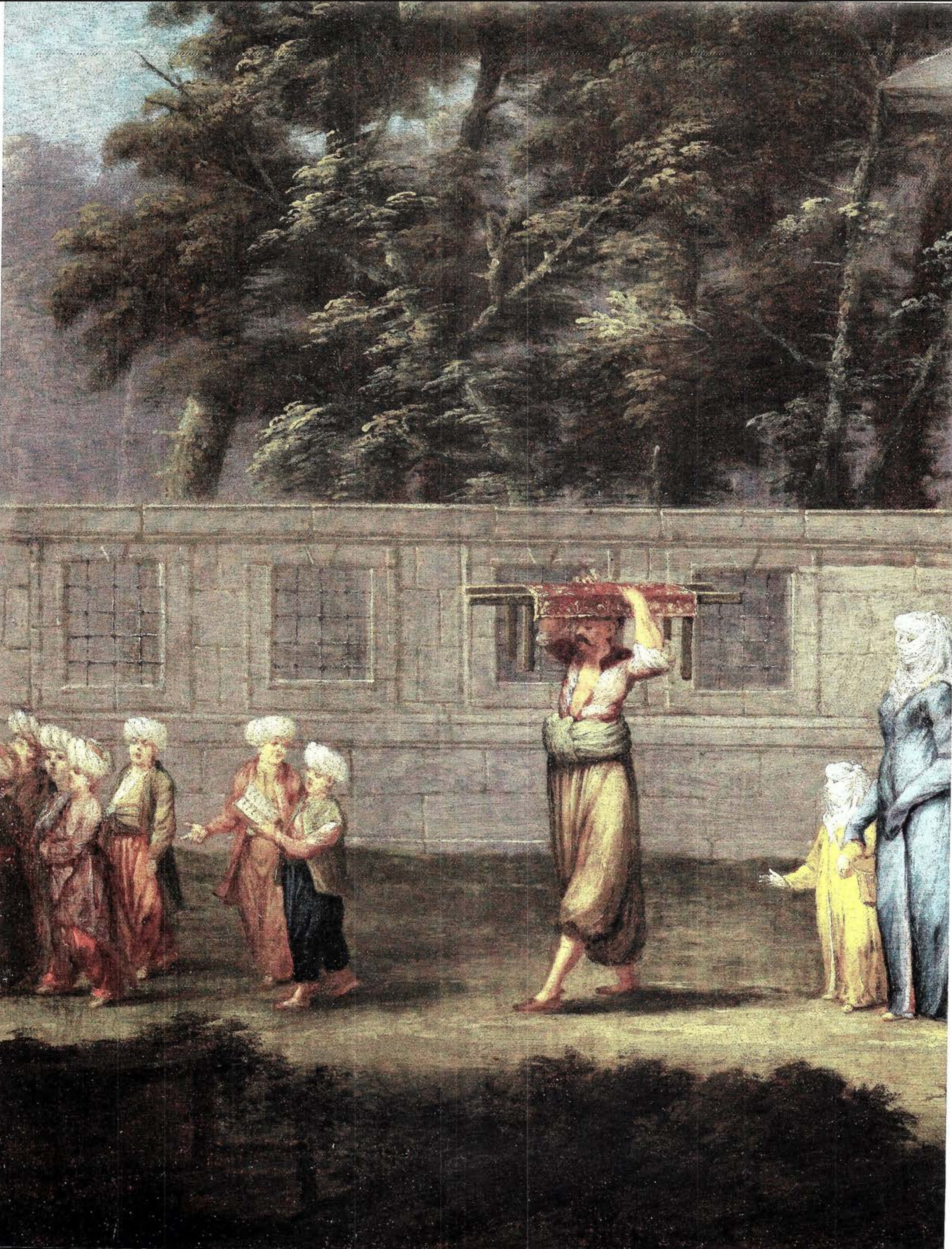
A man's rose-cut diamond ring, Istanbul, c1740
The diamond trade provided a useful addition to Calkoen's salary. He owned this Ottoman diamond ring, which is now in the Rijksmuseum, along with his paintings, document cases and walking stick. Rose-cut diamonds, fashionable in Ottoman Istanbul, are still called 'felemenk' (Flemish) in Turkish

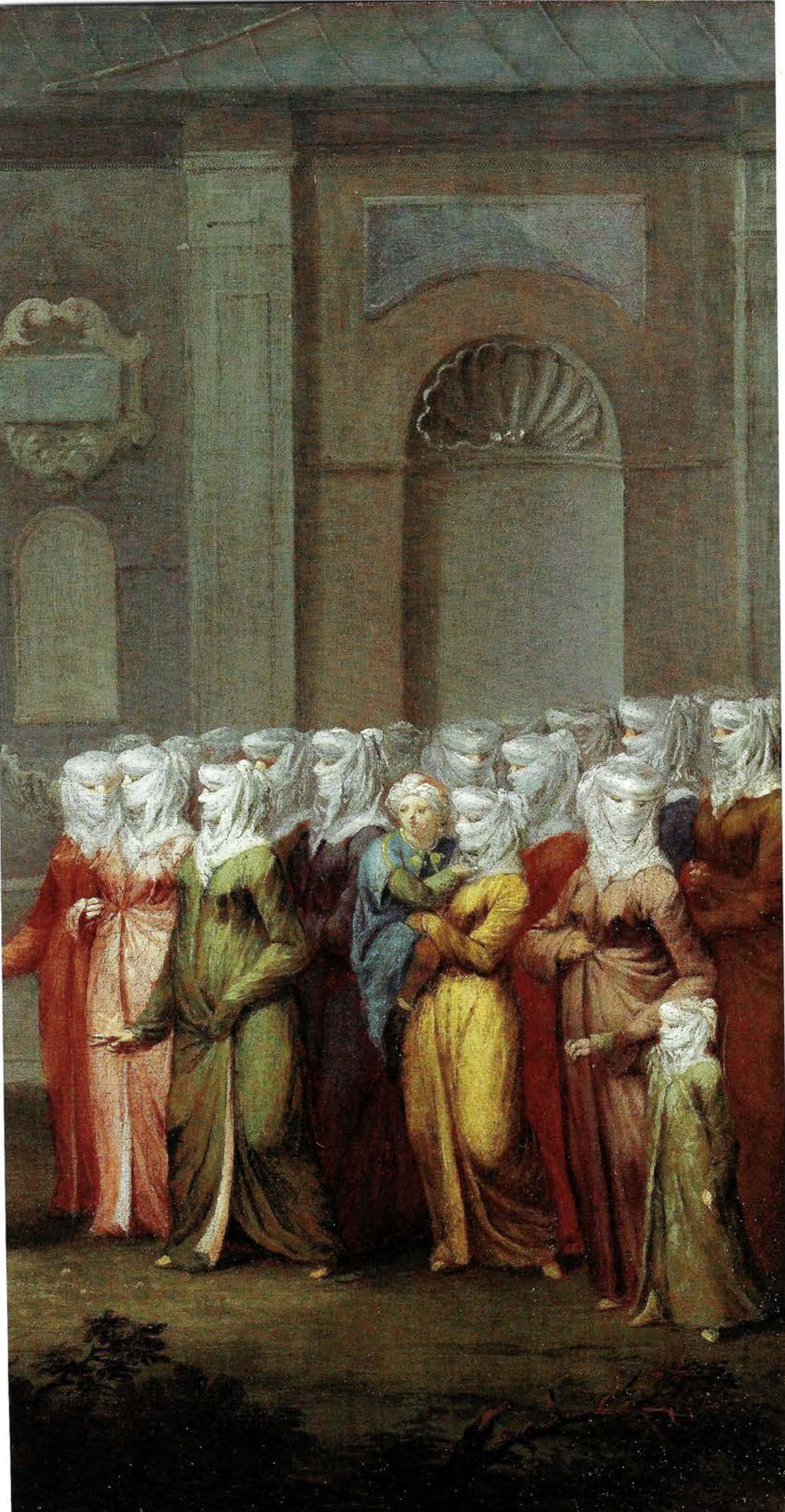


An Embassy Building at Pera, Studio of Vanmour, c1720–50
Like most foreign envoys, Calkoen lived in a luxurious house in Pera. This painting gives an impression of the embassies there. The residence and reception rooms were on the upper storeys, which were built of timber. The lower half, built of brick, was reserved for the servants – there were 40 in Calkoen's household. The ambassador's superiors were shocked by his expenses









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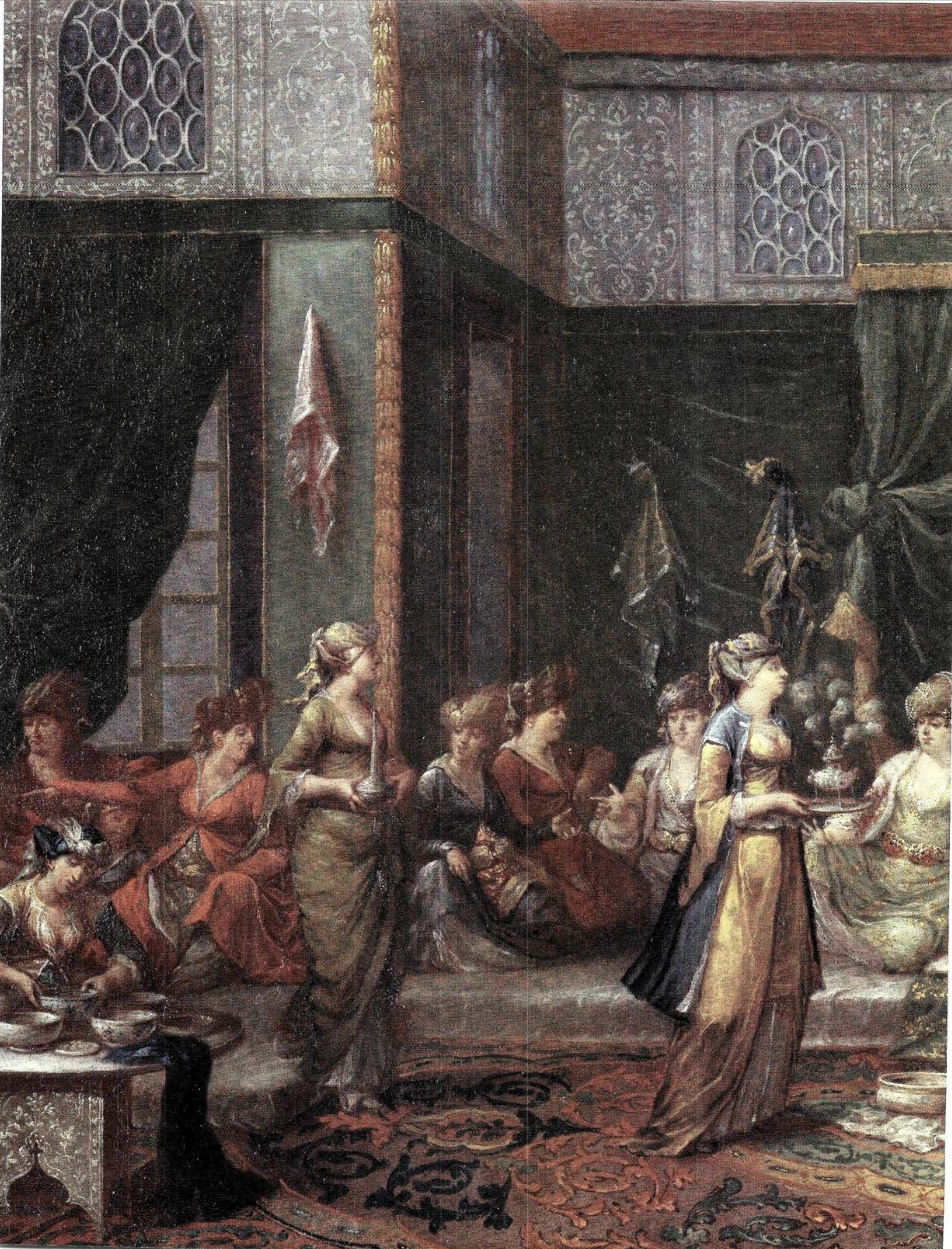
The prolific Vanmour

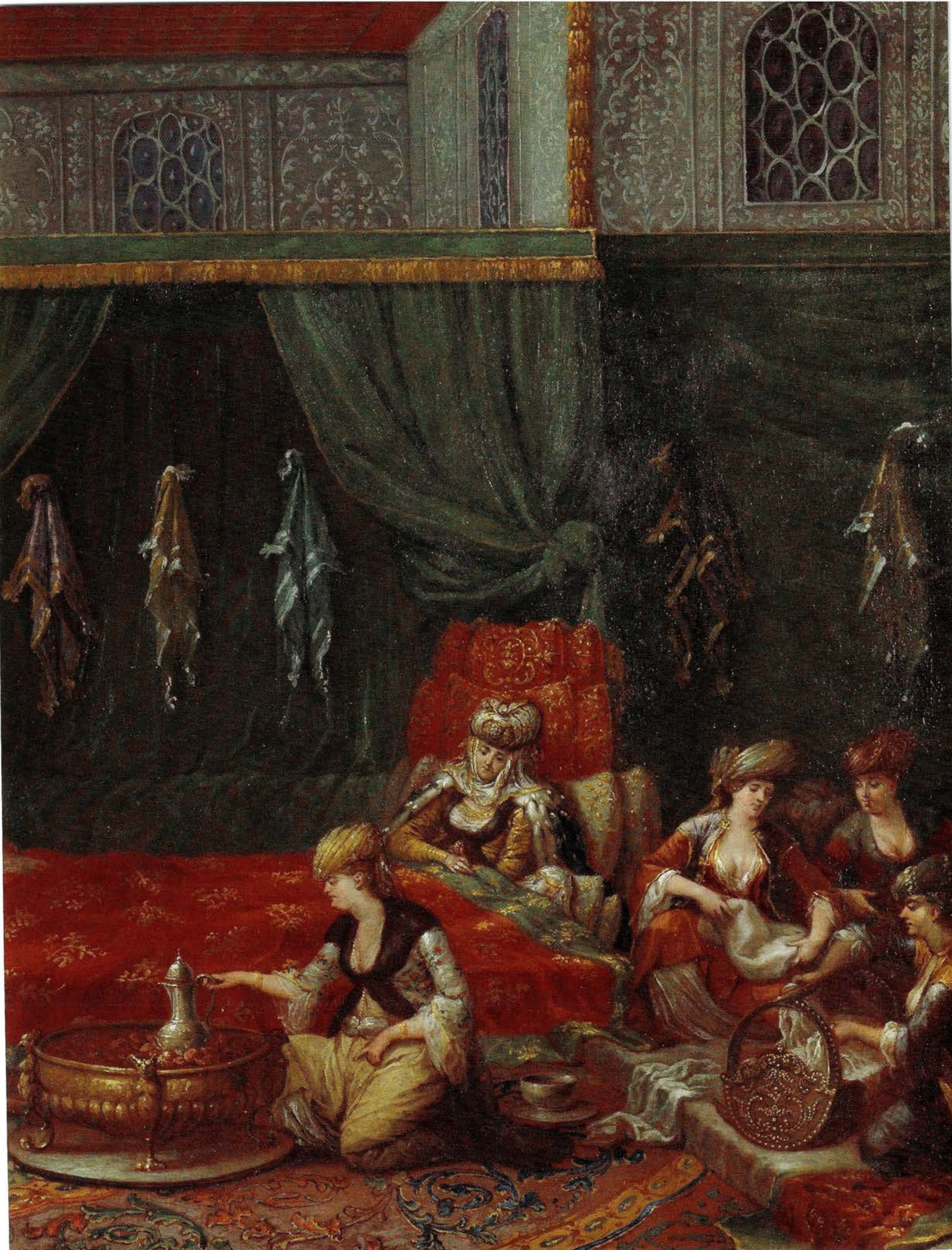
When Calkoen moved to Dresden as ambassador, he took with him from Istanbul 11 crates of paintings, most of them by Jean-Baptiste Vanmour (or his studio) and now in the Rijksmuseum. Some of them are shown here. The paintings earned Calkoen great kudos – the Elector was famous for his collection of Turkish art. A French-Flemish artist who lived in Istanbul for almost 40 years, Vanmour depicted ambassadors being received by the Sultan, Ottoman officials, genre scenes and costumes

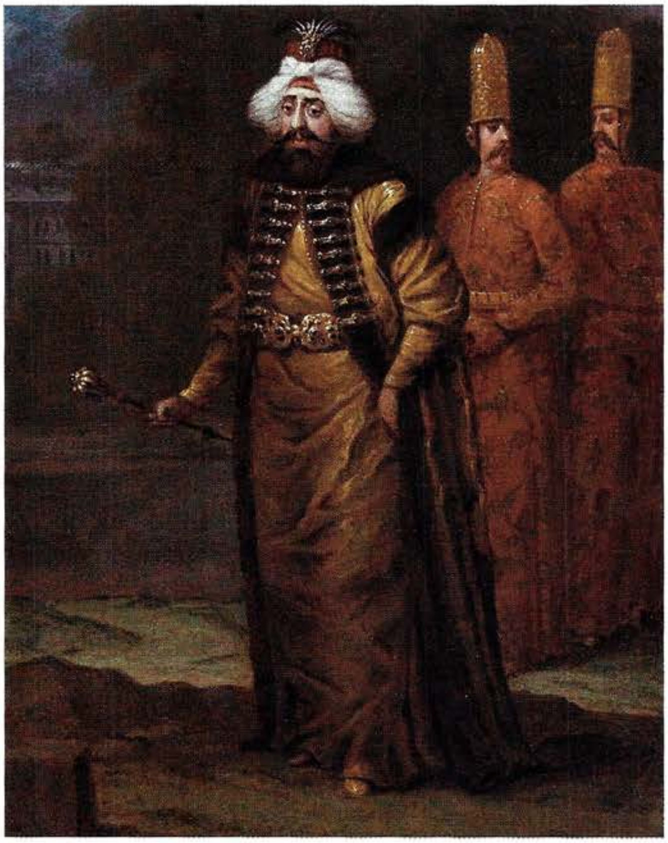
Previous pages: The Grand Vizier Crossing the Atmeydani, 1727–37
In this painting, a metre wide with its frame, Vanmour shows the grand vizier on his way to the Tokpkapi. The Sultanahmet Mosque has been concertinaed to display every detail

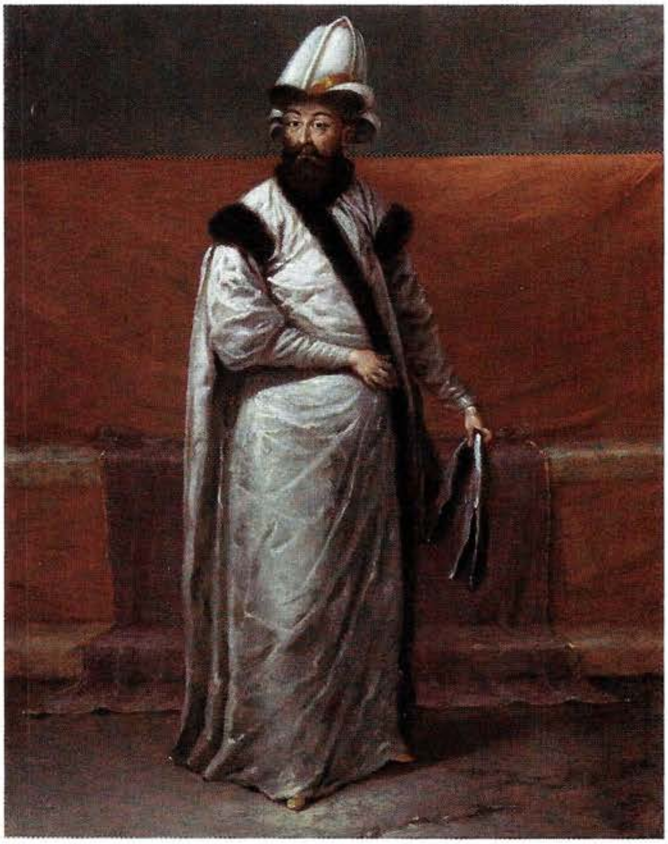
This page: The First Day at School, 1727–37
Vanmour's paintings of everyday life include this colourful group of women in almost transparent muslin veils. They follow a mother taking her daughter to school for the first time. A man walks ahead, carrying the girl's embroidery frame. Sewing, embroidery and music were favourite pastimes of well-to-do Turkish women

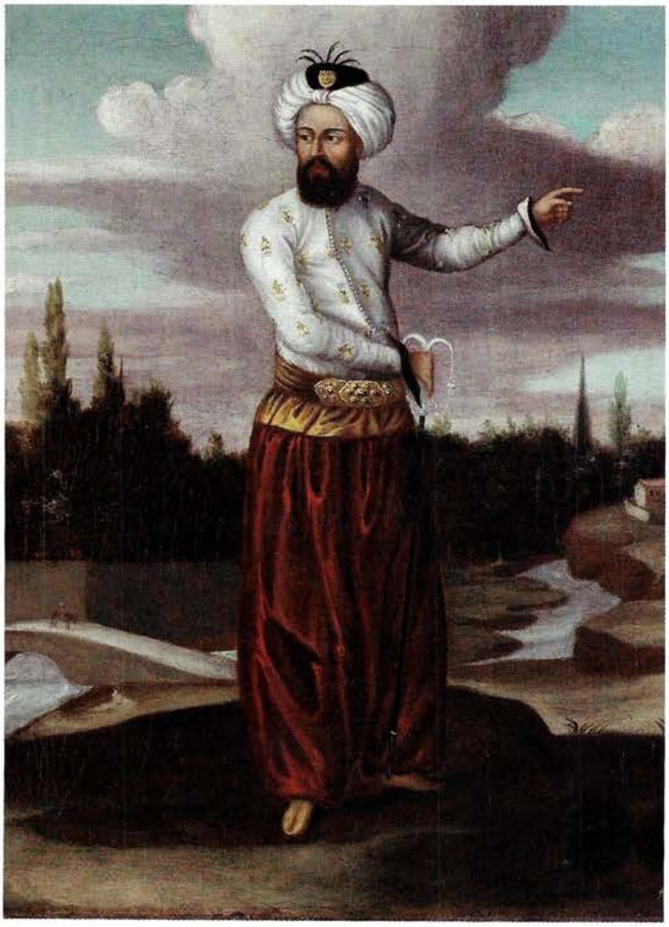
Following pages: The Lying-in Room of a Prominent Turkish Woman, 1727–37
In this oil, again a metre wide, Vanmour paints a family visit after the birth of a baby, a scene familiar from the letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, whose husband had been ambassador. One girl prepares a 'lohusa' sherbet with cinnamon and cloves, another makes coffee, while two others pass around with rose-water and incense. A luxurious bed is made up for the young mother in all her finery as a cradle is prepared for the baby

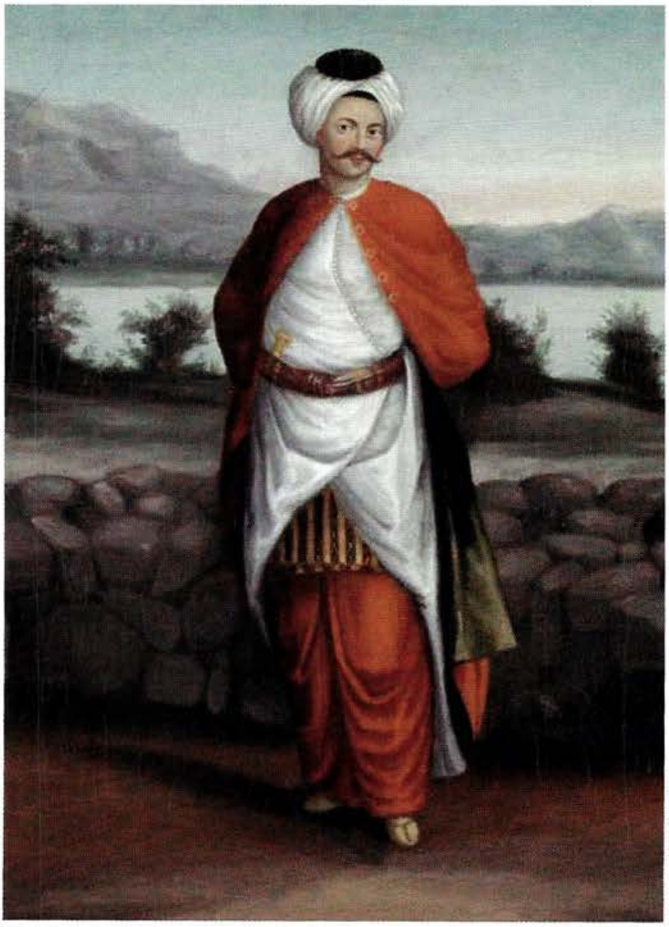












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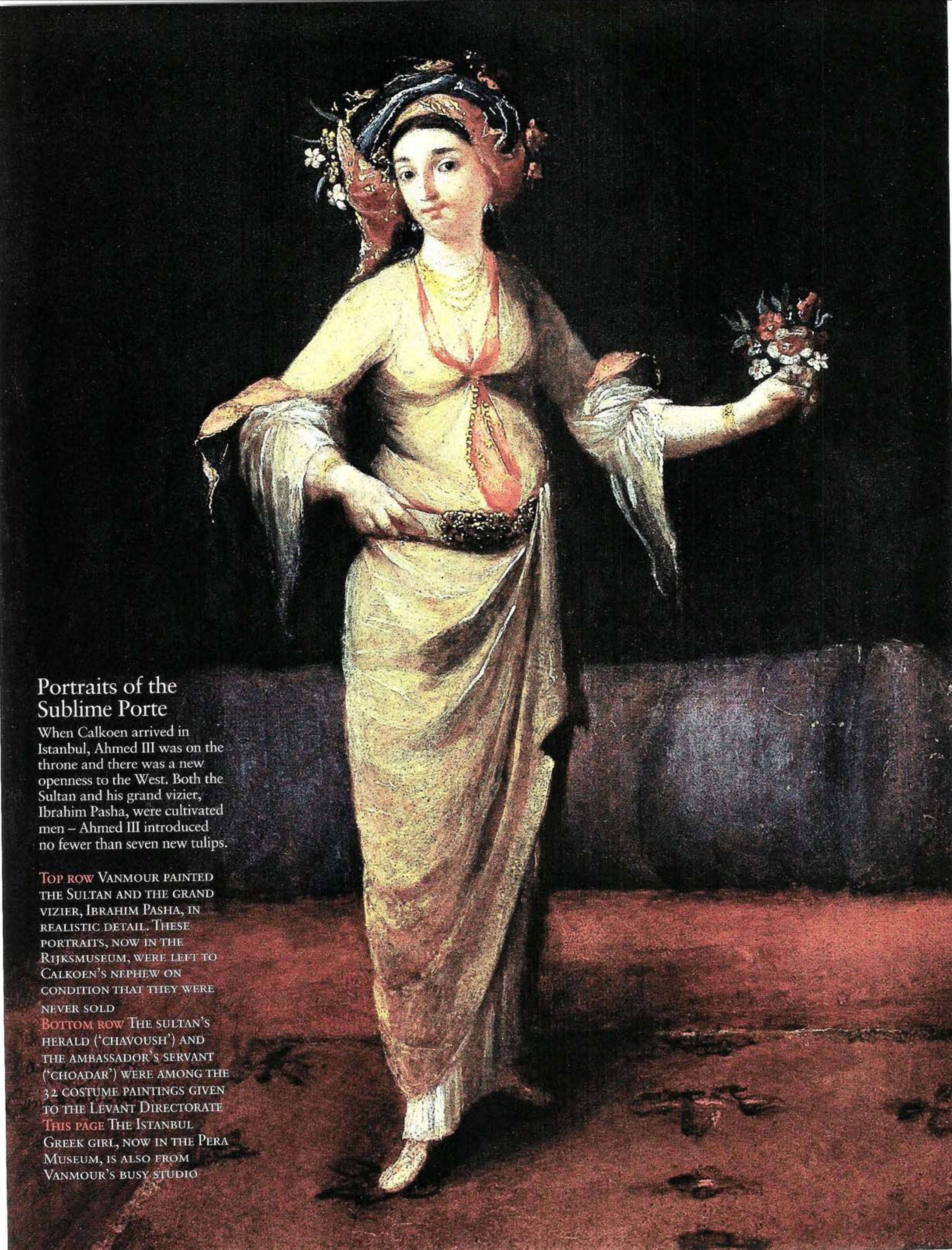
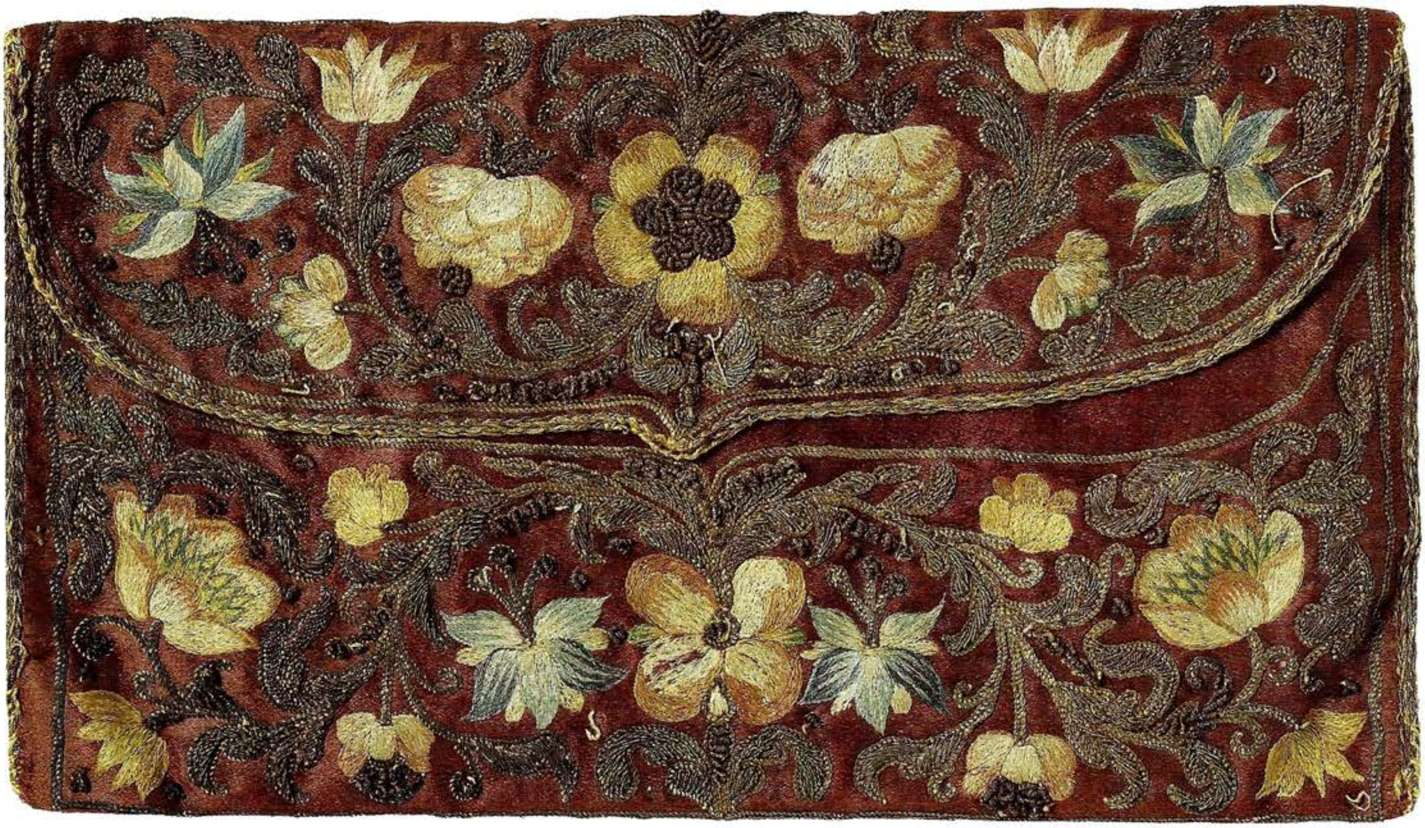


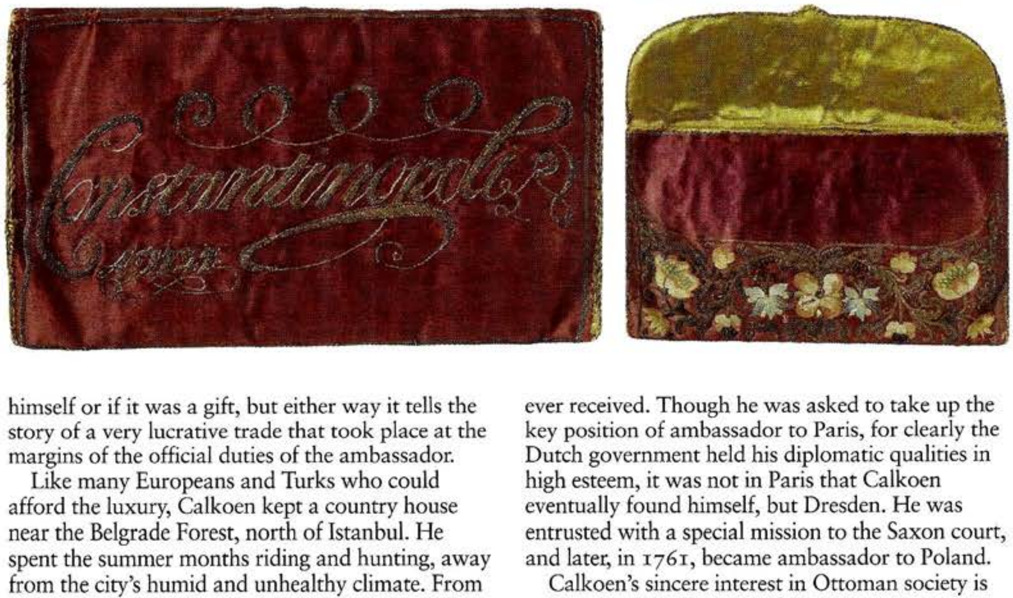
Portraits of the Sublime Porte

When Calkoen arrived in Istanbul, Ahmed III was on the throne and there was a new openness to the West. Both the Sultan and his grand vizier, Ibrahim Pasha, were cultivated men – Ahmed III introduced no fewer than seven new tulips.

TOP ROW VANMOUR PAINTED THE SULTAN AND THE GRAND VIZIER, IBRAHIM PASHA, IN REALISTIC DETAIL. THESE PORTRAITS, NOW IN THE RIJKSMUSEUM, WERE LEFT TO CALKOEN'S NEPHEW ON CONDITION THAT THEY WERE NEVER SOLD
BOTTOM ROW THE SULTAN'S HERALD ('CHAVOUSH') AND THE AMBASSADOR'S SERVANT ('CHOADAR') WERE AMONG THE 32 COSTUME PAINTINGS GIVEN TO THE LEVANT DIRECTORATE
THIS PAGE THE ISTANBUL GREEK GIRL, NOW IN THE PERA MUSEUM, IS ALSO FROM VANMOUR'S BUSY STUDIO



DOCUMENT CASE, ISTANBUL, 1727
CORNELIS CALKOEN ARRIVED IN ISTANBUL IN THE SPRING OF 1727. IT WAS IN THAT SAME YEAR THAT HE HAD THIS LETTER CASE MADE. EMBROIDERED ON THE BACK ARE THE WORDS 'CONSTANTINOPOLI A[NNO] 1727'. THESE SILK BAGS, EMBROIDERED WITH SILK FLOSS AND GOLD AND SILVER THREAD, ARE SEEN HERE ALMOST ACTUAL SIZE. CALKOEN KEPT IMPORTANT PAPERS IN THEM



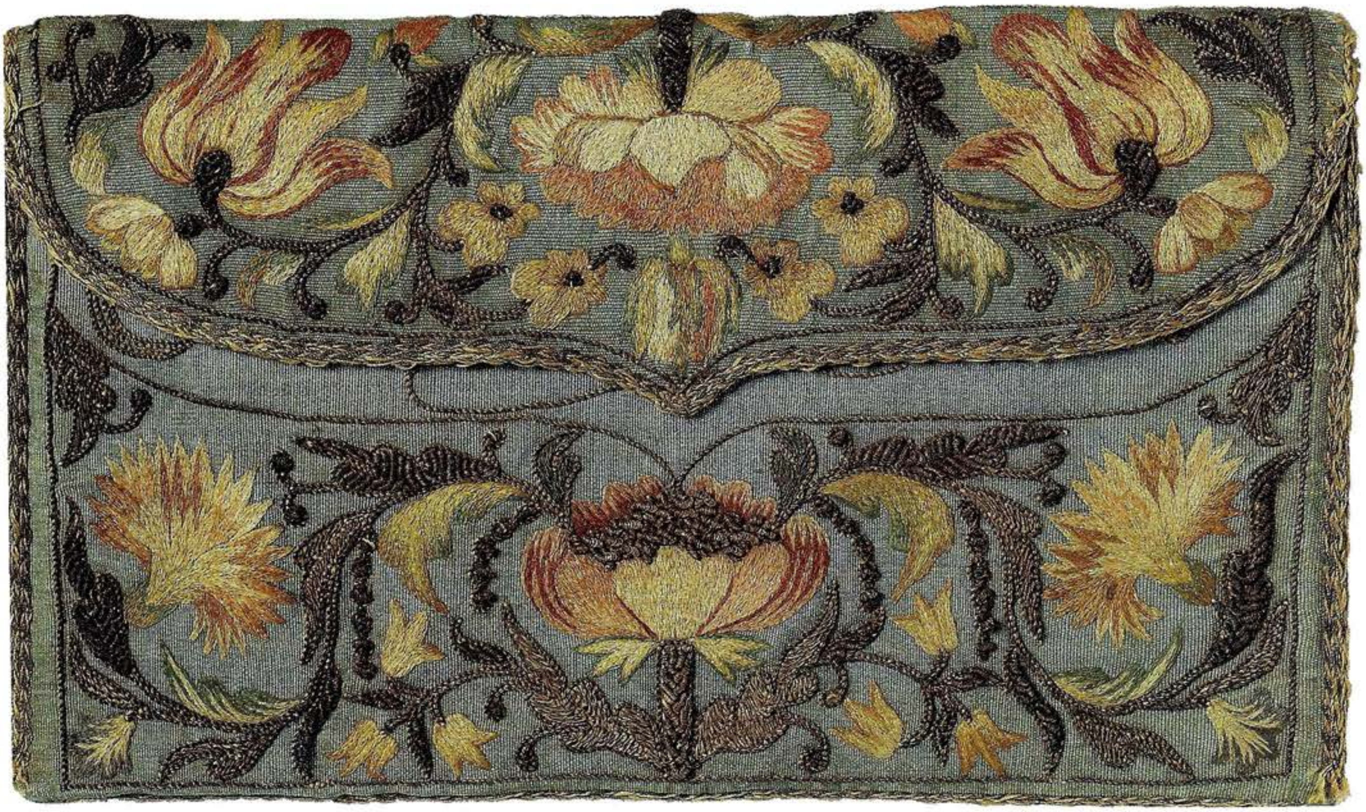
RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM

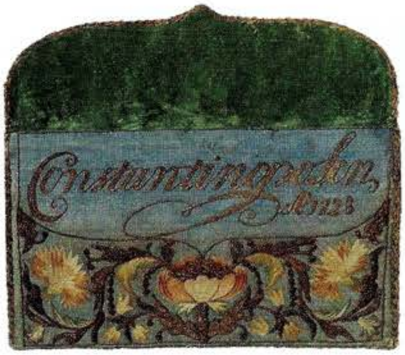
himself or if it was a gift, but either way it tells the story of a very lucrative trade that took place at the margins of the official duties of the ambassador.

Like many Europeans and Turks who could afford the luxury, Calkoen kept a country house near the Belgrade Forest, north of Istanbul. He spent the summer months riding and hunting, away from the city's humid and unhealthy climate. From this house he had a view of the Black Sea and the Bosphorus. Dutch residents of Istanbul and other Europeans would visit, as well as Ottoman functionaries, a sign that Calkoen's association with the Ottoman court was built on more than mere diplomacy. Besides diplomatic meetings, he also met Ottoman government officials at social events, including the parties and balls held at the various embassies. In the garden of the country house grew double white hyacinths, which Calkoen would present to ministers of the court.

It was at an audience on April 4, 1744 that Calkoen took official leave of the grand vizier. He was presented with an ermine-trimmed kaftan, a gift more luxurious than any other ambassador had ever received. Though he was asked to take up the key position of ambassador to Paris, for clearly the Dutch government held his diplomatic qualities in high esteem, it was not in Paris that Calkoen eventually found himself, but Dresden. He was entrusted with a special mission to the Saxon court, and later, in 1761, became ambassador to Poland.

Calkoen's sincere interest in Ottoman society is reflected in his collection of Turkish paintings, which he took with him to Dresden, where they helped keep his memories of Istanbul alive. Besides 11 crates of paintings, Calkoen's luggage for Dresden contained many souvenirs from Istanbul: the ermine-trimmed kaftan, of course, but also large and small Turkish coffee sets, a round table *à la turque*, a crateful of Ottoman manuscripts, a Turkish basin and several embroidered items such as handkerchiefs and document cases. It is significant that during his time in Istanbul Calkoen not only adapted his way of life to the local customs but also took with him these typical Turkish objects, first to Dresden and later to the Netherlands. They were possessions he treasured





Document case, Istanbul, 1728
Calkoen had this case made in his second year. 'Constantinopolen A[nno] 1728' is embroidered under the flap. He admired needlework and often sent embroidered letter cases and handkerchiefs to relatives and friends
Below: Calkoen's Ottoman dagger
Another Istanbul souvenir in the Rijksmuseum, this dagger belonged to Calkoen's descendants until recently

and continued to use for the rest of his life.

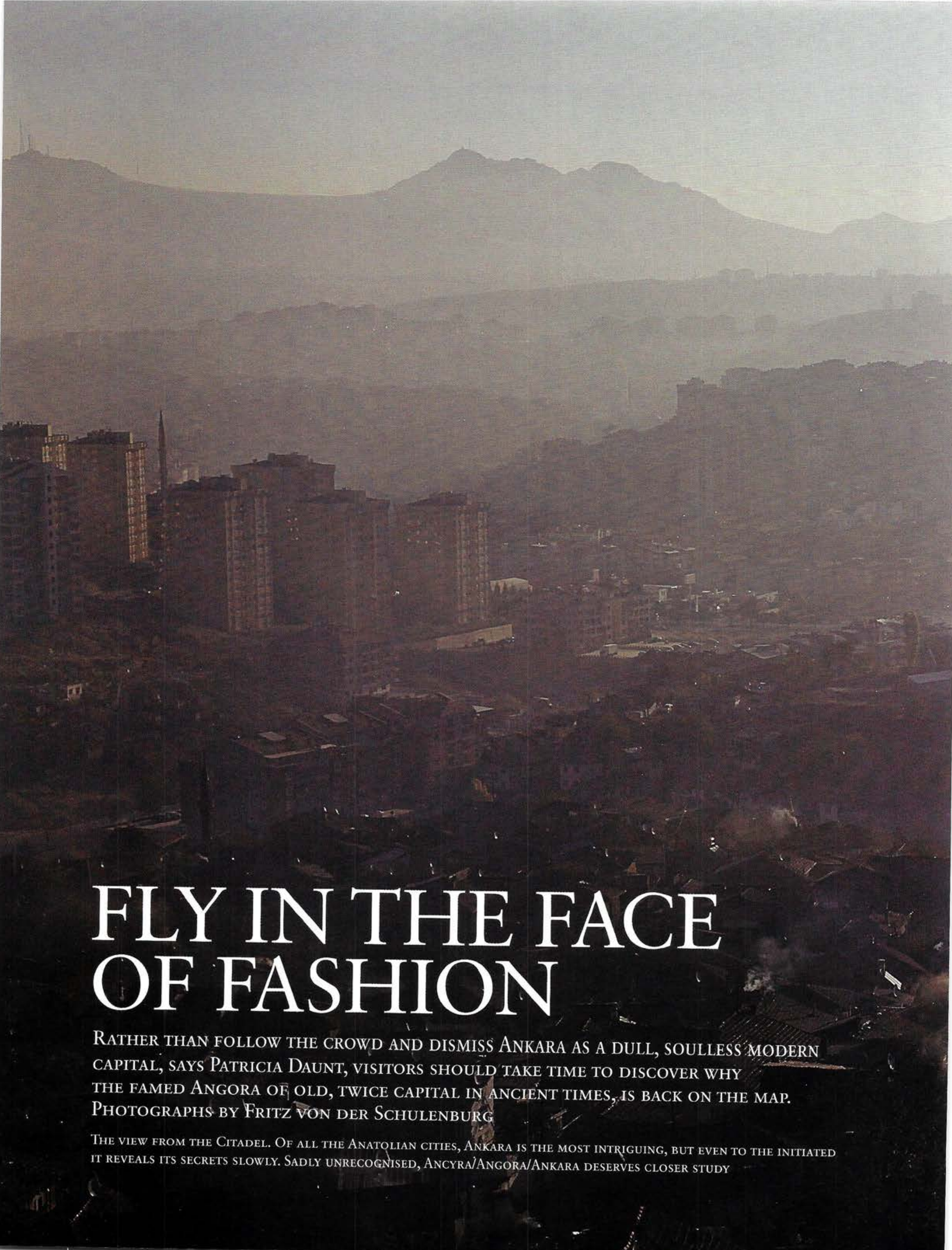
Calkoen died on March 2, 1764, shortly before he was due to return to Istanbul to take up a second posting as ambassador. He had not seen his beloved city since 1744. His real legacy is his collection of Turkish paintings. He was aware of their value and of the importance of keeping the works together for posterity. In the 1740s he had already given the Directorate of Levant Trade a series of 32 costume paintings. In his will Calkoen directed that the remaining Turkish paintings should pass to Abraham Calkoen, a son of his brother, with the stipulation that they should never be sold. Thanks to the complex conditions of his will, the ambassador's remarkable collection has indeed remained intact.

In 1902 the 65 works found a home at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam. When the museum reopens in April 2013 there will be a special room in the 18th-century department completely filled with Calkoen's paintings by Vanmour and those wonderful personal possessions. For the public it will be as though they have entered Ambassador Calkoen's very own Turkish cabinet. ◆

Eveline Sint Nicolaas is curator in the History Department of the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam. She has written widely on the Turkish paintings in the Calkoen Collection. E.Sintnicolaas@rijksmuseum.nl

EXHIBITIONS

Sultans, Merchants, Painters: The Early Years of Dutch Relations, which was at the Pera Museum earlier this year, opens at the Amsterdam Museum on April 20 as *The Chamber of Levant Trade: Dutch Merchants and Ottoman Sultans*, until August 26 (www.amsterdammuseum.nl). Curated by Laura van Hasselt of the Amsterdam Museum and Eveline Sint Nicolaas, the show re-creates the original chamber of the Directorate of Levant Trade. The Pera Museum catalogue is available at both museums and from cornucopia.net

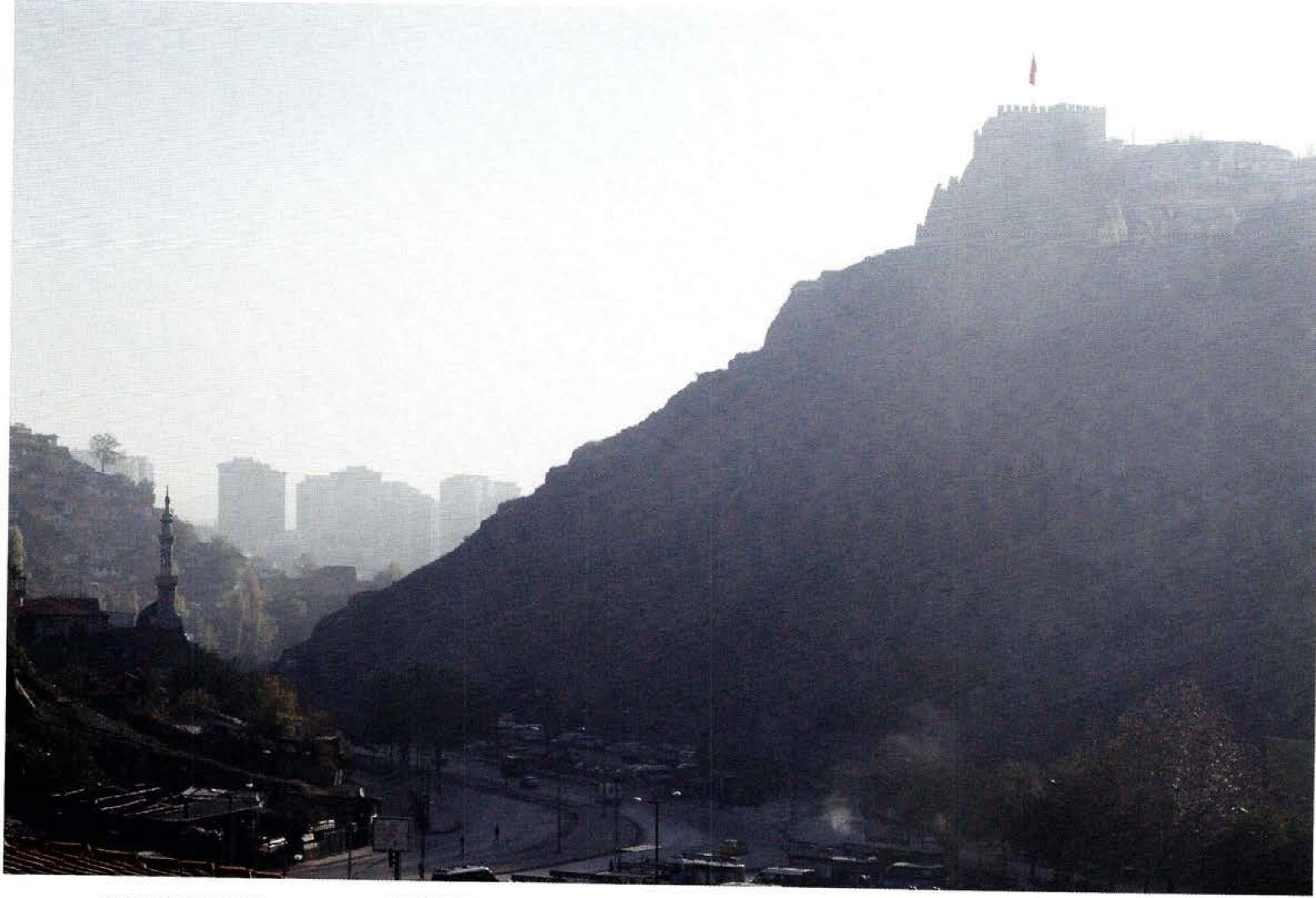


FLY IN THE FACE OF FASHION

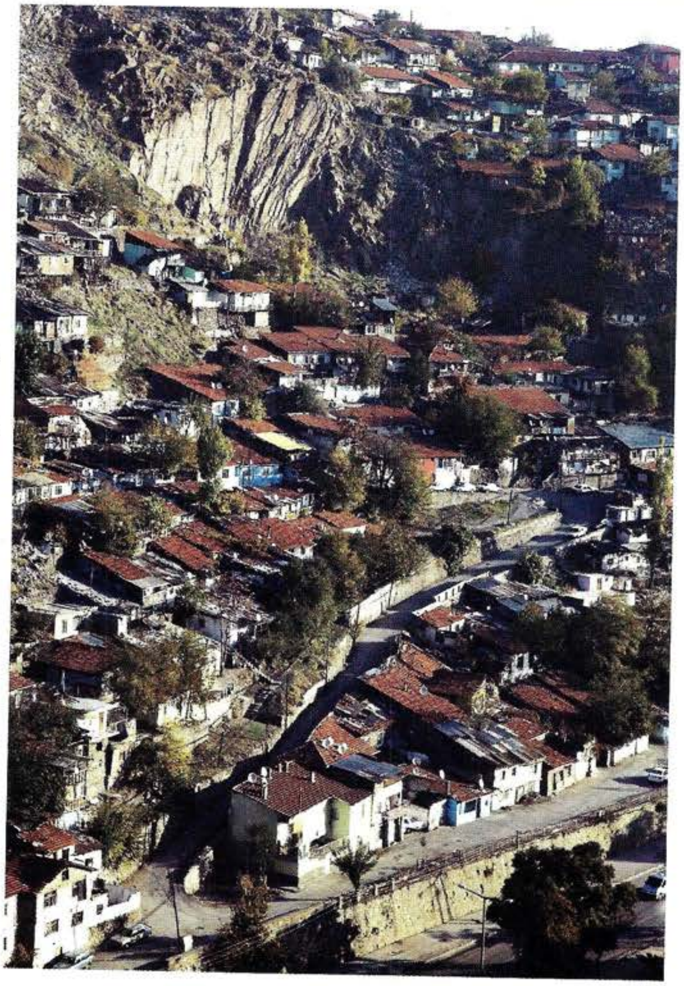
Rather than follow the crowd and dismiss Ankara as a dull, soulless modern capital, says Patricia Daunt, visitors should take time to discover why the famed Angora of old, twice capital in ancient times, is back on the map.

Photographs by Fritz von der Schulenburg

The view from the Citadel. Of all the Anatolian cities, Ankara is the most intriguing, but even to the initiated it reveals its secrets slowly. Sadly unrecognised, Ancyra/Angora/Ankara deserves closer study



ANCIENT ANKARA'S HIDDEN SECRETS



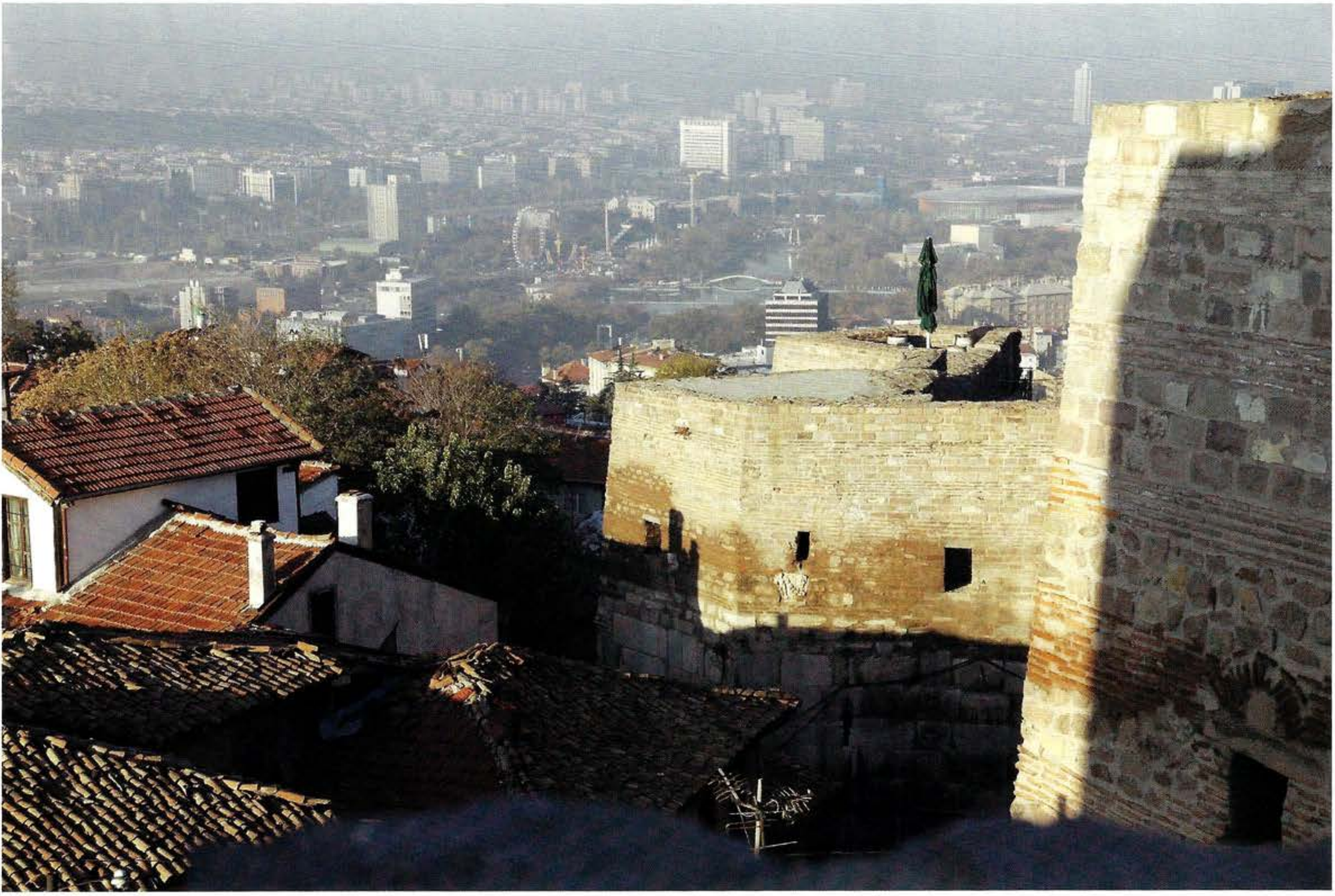
Tourists love Turkey but virtually none come to Ankara. They assume it is an artificial city, chosen as capital simply for its location and built virtually from scratch. It is indeed a new city, chosen by Atatürk for its central position and given fine, if somewhat Teutonic, government buildings during the 1920s and '30s. Since then it has suffered urban sprawl, with a current population of four million. But there is nothing new or artificial about old Ankara. This is no Turkish Brasilia.

Twice capital in antiquity – known as Ancyra under the Romans, as Angora in Ottoman times – Ankara is a neglected modern capital, still ignored by those who, when it comes to history, are in the habit of skipping adroitly from the Hittites to the New Republic. But at last a long-postponed miracle is occurring. A plethora of recent discoveries in Ulus – old Ankara – have awakened a thirst to pull together the missing threads. The Museum of Anatolian Civilisations is no longer the sole attraction: changes in and around the ancient Citadel are now complemented by boutique hotels, one of them of outstanding quality. When planning your next trip to Turkey, why not be unfashionable and start with a few days in old Ankara before carrying on north, south, east or west? You will not be disappointed.

ROMAN ANCYRA AND OTTOMAN ANGORA

Nature has given Ankara a magnificent site from which to prosper and command. Built round an extinct volcano, the city dominates a gorge through which the Ankara river, a tributary of the Sakarya, once flowed.

From the north, Byzantine walls dominate a township of dilapidated pink brick houses and red-roofed shacks clinging in painterly disorder to the rocky escarpments rising from the valley floor. From the west, knowing eyes can pick out the line of the third-century walls built to defend

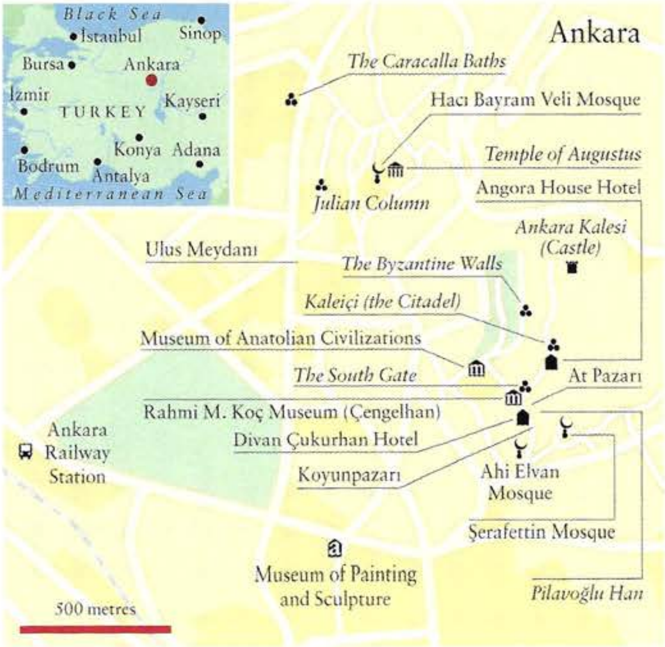


Ancyra, Roman capital of the province of Galatia, spreading out across a flattening hill. From the south, the medieval Muslim, Christian and Jewish quarters of Ottoman Angora and the foundations of its 17th-century walls must be imagined beneath modern Ulus. Likewise the dam that once controlled the flash flooding of the now piped river has made way for an east–west thoroughfare through the gorge.

Some 3,000 years ago Ankara was a flourishing Phrygian city, which submitted to Alexander the Great before an army of nomadic Gauls appeared around 278 BC. These Celtic conquerors had lost their warlike vigour and adopted softer Anatolian ways by the time they were absorbed into the Roman empire, with Ancyra as the capital of the province of Galatia. Ancyra prospered under the early Byzantine emperors, but the great Anatolian crossroads came successively under Arab, then Seljuk, then Mongol control, before the Ottoman ascendancy after 1414. Repeated assault and reconstruction brought change again and again to its ramparts and towers.

Each regime left its mark. And each was accompanied by destruction. The town in Anatolia that Atatürk chose as his capital in 1923 was a primitive place. An early New Republican on his first visit to the new capital in 1924 describes his arrival in Angora as "through the swamp" (mosquito-infested and malarial, thanks to the confluence of the two Ankara rivers), then through "the site of the fire" (which in 1917 destroyed half the old city), reaching "a village of adobe huts and mud-brick houses, crooked streets either paved or of rough cobblestones".

Other than the Roman Temple of Augustus and the 15th-century Hacı Bayram Mosque standing on the Phrygian acropolis, the fourth-century so-called Julian Column below them, the remains of the third-century Caracalla Baths overlooking the plain – thought to have been destroyed during the Persian occupation some five centuries later – and parts of the Roman theatre recently discovered below the Citadel's outer walls, few pre-20th-century monuments have survived on this combustible hillside regularly devastated by fire. All that is left of the 19th-century mills and tanneries are a few Ottoman buildings that have escaped the mayoral bulldozer.

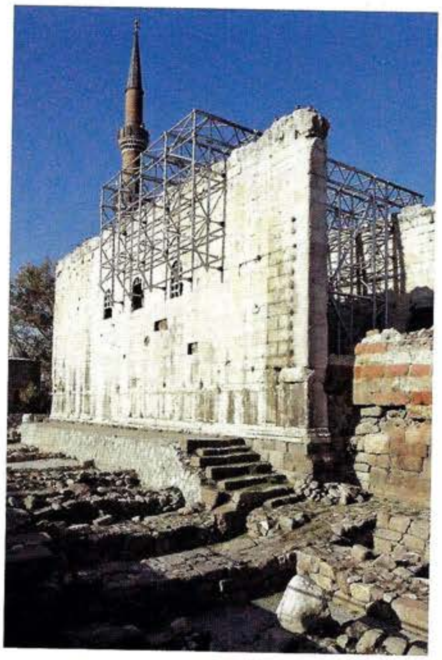

Black Sea
İstanbul
Sinop
Bursa
Ankara
İzmir
TURKEY
Kayseri
Konya
Adana
Bodrum
Antalya
Mediterranean Sea
Ankara
The Caracalla Baths
Hacı Bayram Veli Mosque
Temple of Augustus
Angora House Hotel
Julian Column
Ankara Kalesi (Castle)
Ulus Meydanı
The Byzantine Walls
Kaleiçi (the Citadel)
Museum of Anatolian Civilizations
The South Gate
At Pazarı
Rahmi M. Koç Museum (Çengelhan)
Ankara Railway Station
Divan Çukurhan Hotel
Koyunpazarı
Ahi Elvan Mosque
Şerafettin Mosque
Museum of Painting and Sculpture
Pilavoğlu Han
500 metres

OPPOSITE, TOP A FLAG FLIES ABOVE AKKALE, THE 11TH-CENTURY WHITE LIMESTONE FORT BUILT BY THE SELJUKS TO DOMINATE THE GORGE OF THE ANKARA RIVER. IN 1402, FOLLOWING THE BATTLE OF ANKARA, TAMERLANE THE MONGOL IMPRISONED BEYAZIT THE OTTOMAN IN THE FORT
OPPOSITE, BELOW RED-ROOFED 'GECE KONDU' (SHANTY-TOWN DWELLINGS) PERCH ABOVE 19TH-CENTURY LATH-AND-PLASTER HOUSES OVERHANGING THE GORGE
ABOVE HOUSES BUILT AGAINST THE BYZANTINE WALLS

SUSANNA HICKLING

THE TEMPLE OF AUGUSTUS AND THE HACI BAYRAM MOSQUE

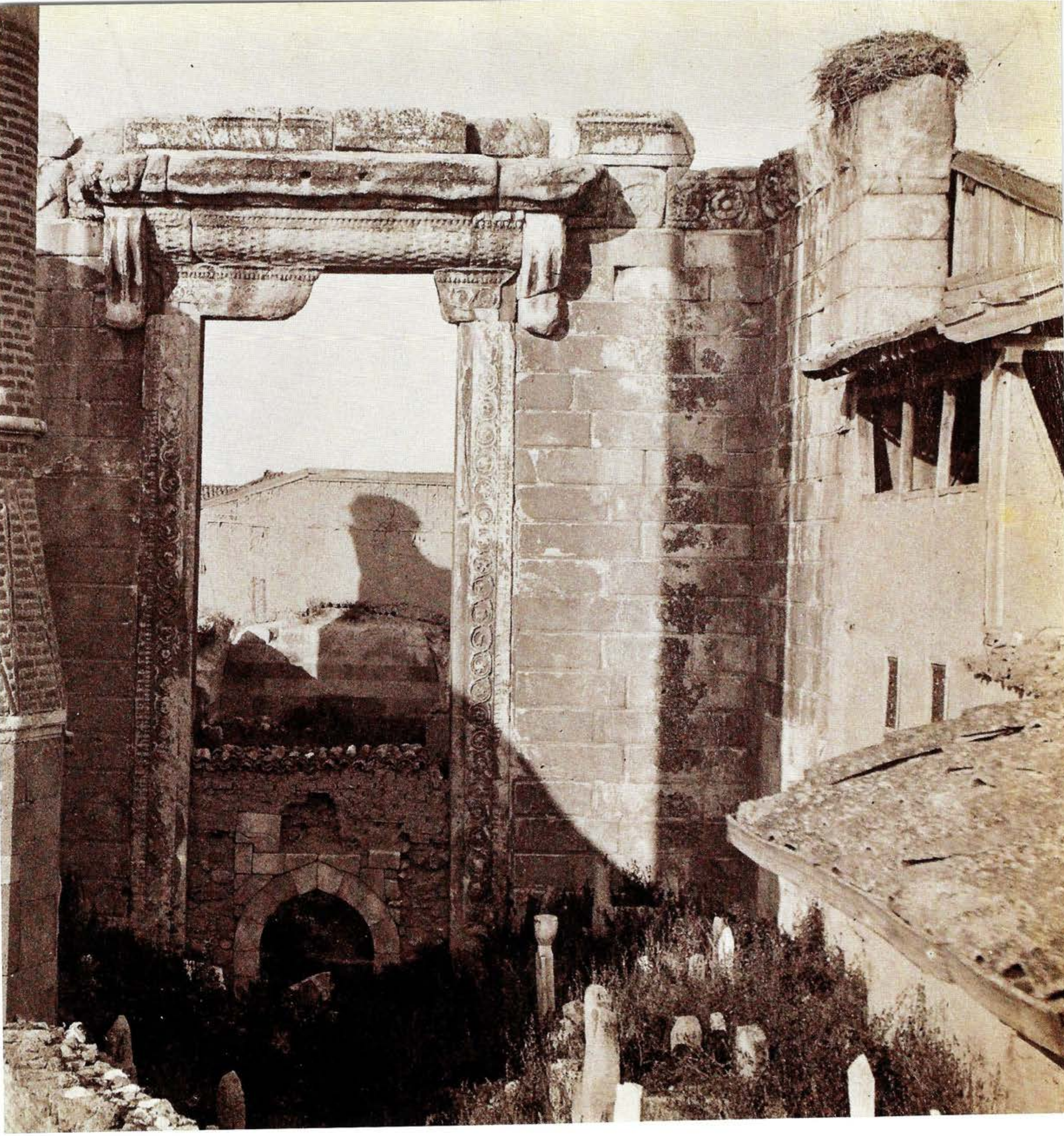
To honour Caesar, the people of Galatia raised a temple of white Afyon marble on the foundations of the Moon God's former shrine. It was dedicated to "Rome and Augustus" and, as a further touch of good citizenship, a copy of the text of Augustus's *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* – an account of his life and accomplishments that he wrote himself in his 76th year and circulated to the provinces – was engraved on the temple's stone walls in both Latin and Greek. On Augustus's death it was inscribed on bronze and placed in front of his mausoleum in Rome. Whereas the mausoleum was despoiled by the Goths, leaving no more than a cylinder of scrubby brick, miraculously the Ankara inscription survives, albeit in need of conservation – the Monumentum Ancyranum is the most complete version in existence.



The city reached its zenith once the Roman capital had been moved to Constantinople. It became a summer resort for early Byzantine emperors escaping the heat of the capital, and was famous for its race meetings and gladiatorial contests, which were sponsored in part by the temple priesthood, as inscriptions in the temple bear witness.

The interior of the inner chamber (*cella*) is the best place to understand some of the changes that were made to the temple during its long history. Whether it had been converted into a Christian church by the mid-sixth century or was still open for Christian worship during the Crusaders' 18-year spell of occupation in the 13th century, or closed by the time the Ottoman sultan Beyazıt was captured by the Mongol emperor Timur (Tamerlane) during the Battle of Ankara in 1402, is anyone's guess. But 25 years later a shrine dedicated to the founder of the Sufi dervish sect, Hacı Bayram-ı Veli akka Numan of Koyunluca, was built with reused stone against the temple/church's south face. Seljuk in style, with a wood and plaster mihrab, the mosque was restored during the 16th century by none other than the legendary imperial Ottoman architect Sinan, before being embellished in the 18th century with Kütahya tiles.

The significance of Ankara's principal monument was revealed by the Flemish writer and herbalist

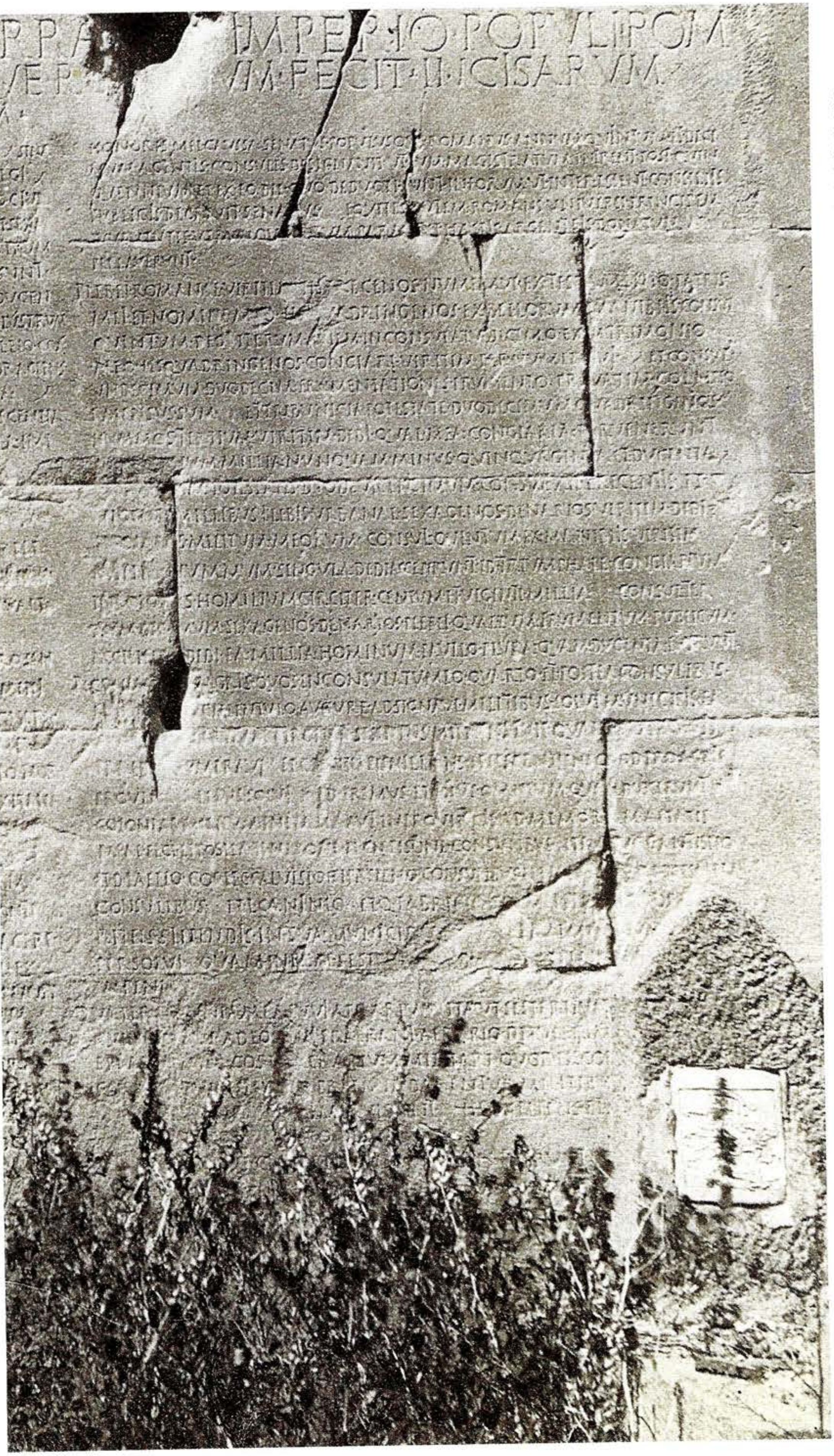


UPM ARCHIVES

Above John Henry Haynes's 1884 photograph of the entrance to the Temple of Augustus, with the 15th-century Haci Bayram Mosque built against its flank

Opposite The north wall of the Temple of Augustus is inscribed in Latin and Greek with the most complete surviving copy of the 'Res Gestae Divi Augusti' – the Acts of the Emperor Augustus. A project to strengthen the hazardously leaning wall was completed in 2010. The Greek version and the first three columns of the Latin version are most easily legible in slanting sunlight between 10am and 2pm. The best light for reading the last three columns of the Latin text is after 3pm. The inscription has greatly deteriorated since Haynes photographed it in 1884 (see following pages)

RERVM GESTARVM DIVI AVGVSTI QVIBVS ORBE
SVBIECIT ET INPENSARVM QVAS IN REMPVBLICAM POPV
IN DVABVS AHENEIS PILIS QVAE SVNT ROMAE POSITAE EXEMPLAR SVB

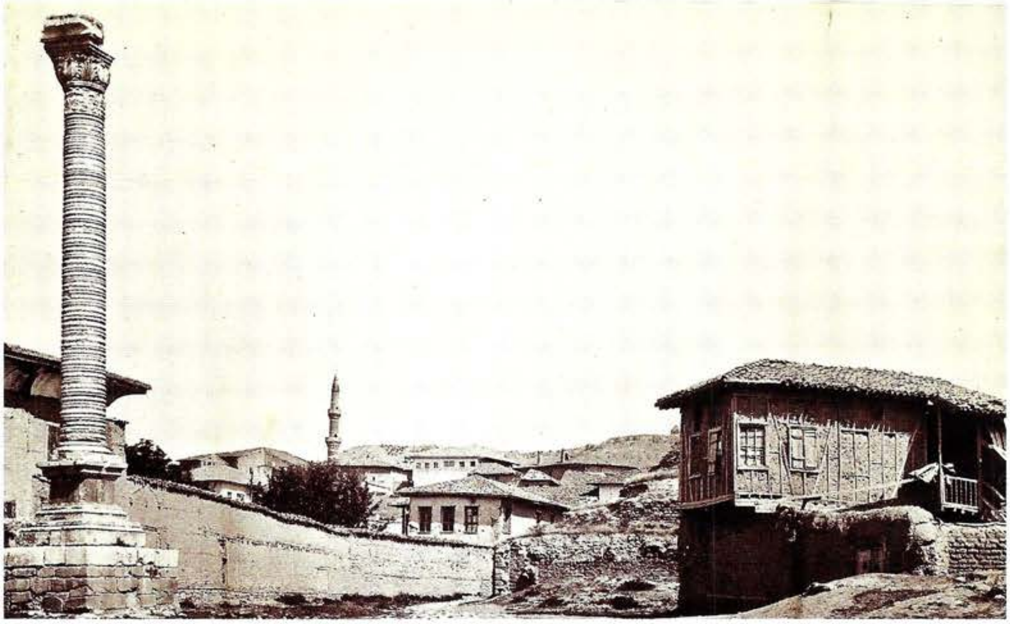


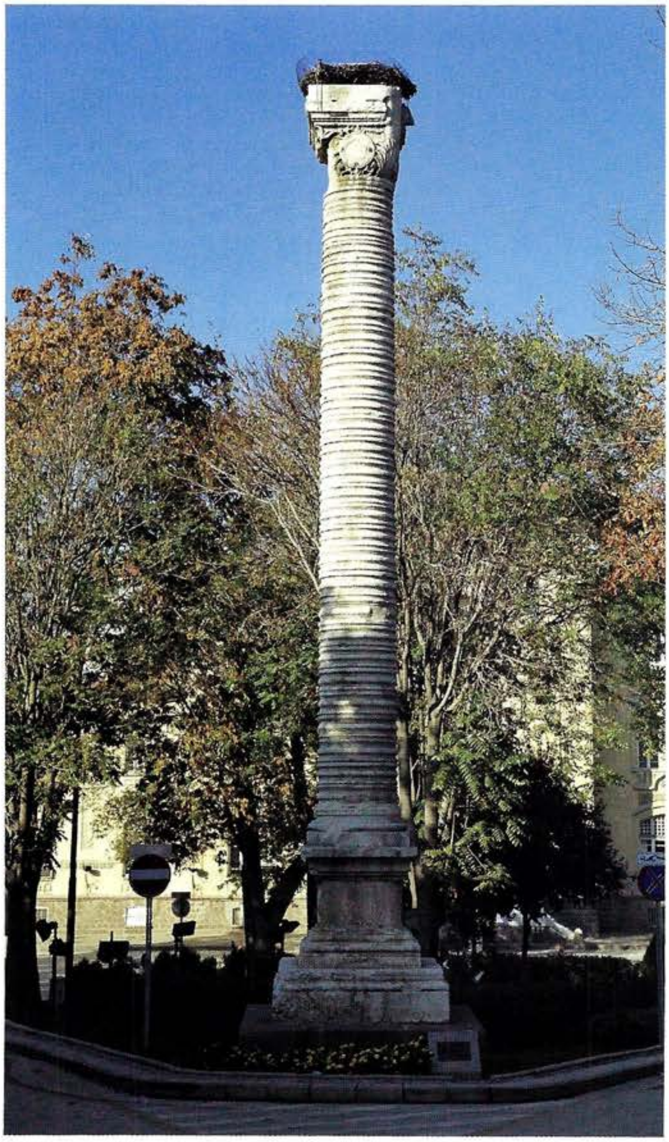
Ogier Ghiselin de Busbecq. During his tour of Galatia in 1557, as Hapsburg envoy to the court of Süleyman the Magnificent, Busbecq discovered in Angora Augustus's *Res Gestae*, long lost from the emperor's mausoleum in Rome but remembered and confirmed through the writings of the Roman historian Suetonius.

Thanks to Busbecq's publication of his important discovery, the temple was frequently visited over the centuries by classical scholars. Fortunately a plan for the temple's most dramatic reuse was averted in 1834 – one of the dervish's more prosperous descendants wished to convert the monument into a private bathhouse attached to the konak he had built within the temple complex.

While the mosque has remained a centre of particular devotion – one of its nearby trees is often festooned with votive rags left by those imploring cures or pregnancies – the temple building has been put to a variety of uses, even for a time as a storeroom for the infant Museum of Anatolian Civilisations. In our own time, the municipality has installed a decorative water feature, complete with illumination in coloured lights. This is not the only threat to the monument – corrosive lignite is again being burnt for heating in old Ankara.

Left Augustus's 'Res Gestae Divi Augusti', photographed by John Henry Haynes in 1884
Above The Citadel is an open-air museum for observant visitors. A Persian inscription dating to 1330 declares exemption from certain taxes in response to complaints from Ankara citizens





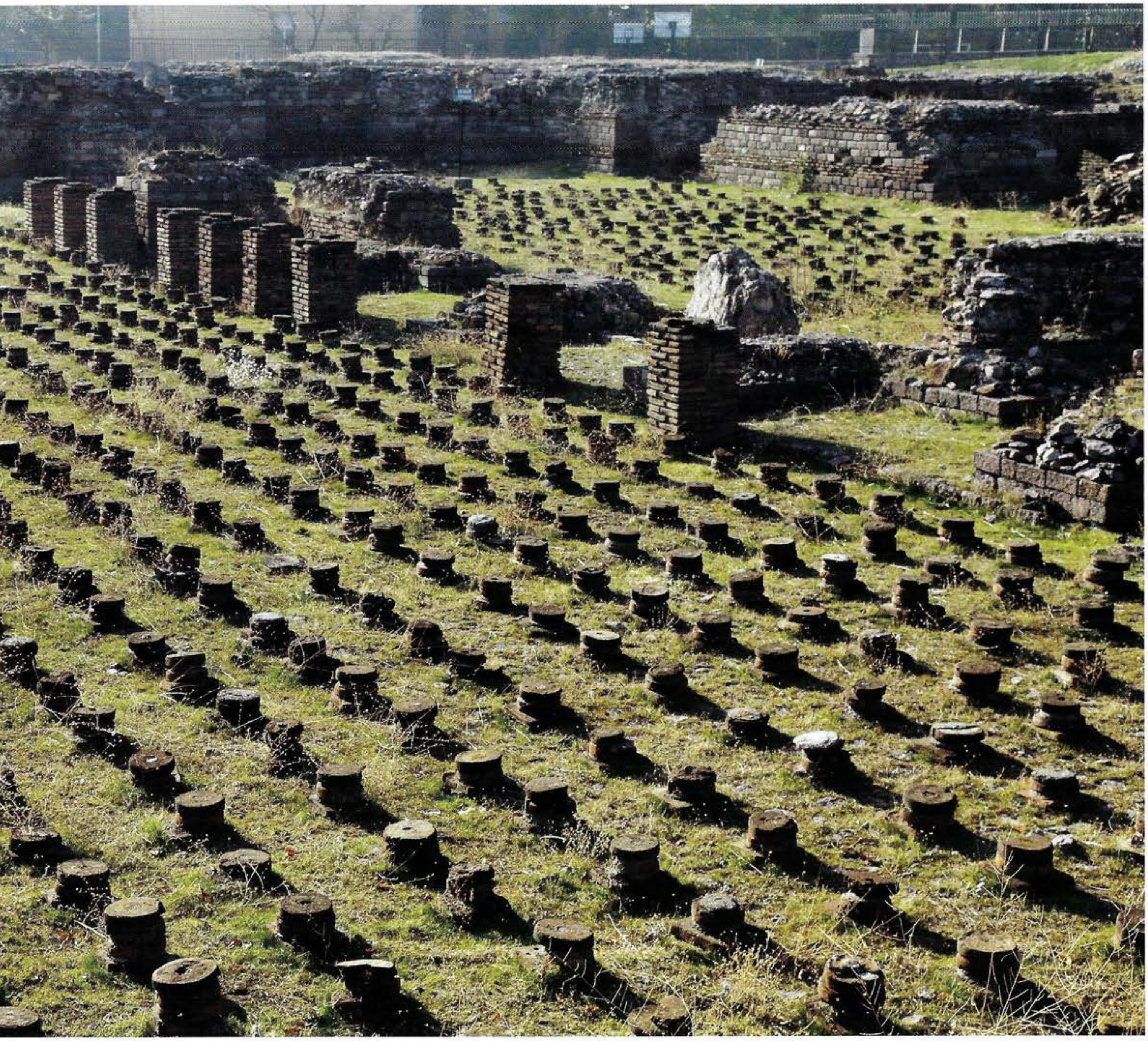
The Julian Column

The history of the Julian Column will never be known for certain. It is merely assumed that it was built in honour of Emperor Julian, who passed through Ancyra in 361 AD. Busbecq failed to mention it; his travelling companion, Dernschwam, was the first to describe the high base and flutes parallel to the ground. Thereafter all travellers mention it: Tournefort in 1701 said that the Turks believed the column to be the tombstone of a girl, which was why it was called Belkıs; in 1740 Pococke related it to an inscription in the city walls honouring Julian; Mordtmann in 1859 mentioned a marble column with a Corinthian capital. Intriguingly, John Henry Haynes, the American archaeologist, photographed it as "Pompey's Pillar" in 1884.

In 1934, by then bending dangerously in its original position beside what is now the İş Bank, it was dismantled and moved northwards. Today the monumental white-grey limestone column stands on a platform of andesite blocks in Hükümet (Government) Square.

Texier had given the number of drums as 15, but photographs show that, after the 1934 move, one was lost. It was not the only loss. The presence of a stork's nest on top of the column and concrete poured in 1934 onto the abacus plate make it impossible to search for any trace of a statue. Given that statues on monumental columns were usually made of bronze, it can be assumed that there used to be a bronze statue of an emperor on the top of this one. But was it Julian?

Left and top left The Julian Column today and in 1884. It was common practice to build monumental columns on a stepped structure to make them higher than their surroundings
Above The hypocaust system used to heat the 'apodyterium', or changing room, in Ankara's Roman baths, completed in 217. The building was financed by the temple priest Tiberius Julius Justus Junianus and given to the city to celebrate Caracalla's visit
Opposite A Hittite basalt lion in the garden of the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations



The Caracalla Baths

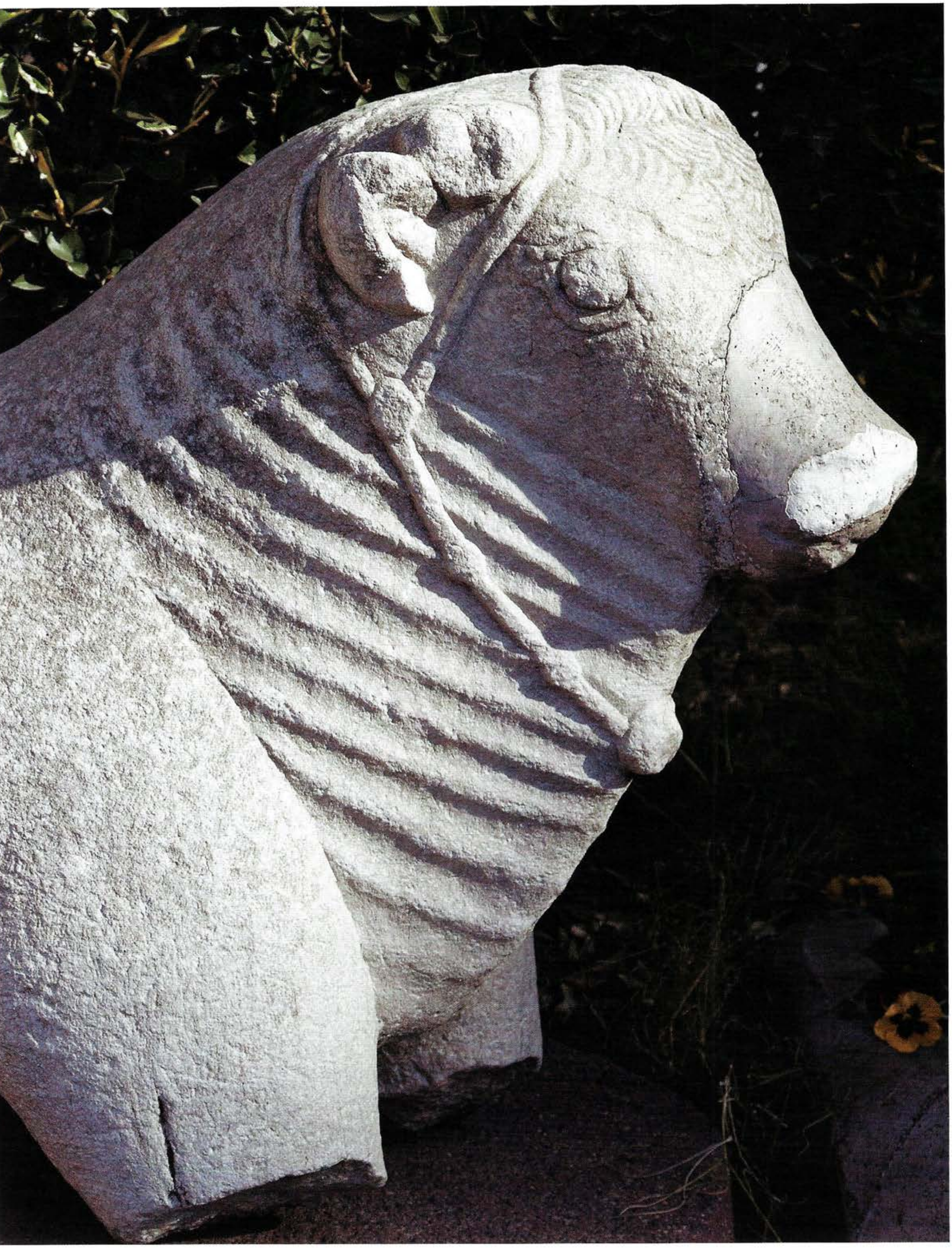
The remains of the so-called Caracalla Baths, connected to the Temple of Augustus by a roadway flanked by second- and third-century grey veined marble columns with Corinthian capitals, stand on the foundations of Ancyra's earliest mound – or *höyük*. Although the existence of the city's bathhouse had been confirmed to 19th-century travellers by an inscription recording the generosity of a third-century temple priest, its discovery in 1925 occurred by chance, when the site was designated for the new capital's Ministry of National Defence.

To flatten the hill, the ruins of an unidentified structure – extensive remains of arches and walls rising to some 30 feet – were dynamited, revealing the foundations of a sizeable bathhouse. Once the rubble had been disposed of as infill for the mosquito-infested swamp below the *höyük*, the site was abandoned, the ministry being built elsewhere.

The first scientific excavation of the baths began in 1931 and continued for more than a decade. Coins established that the building dates to Emperor Caracalla, whose visit to Ancyra was suitably marked at a time when Roman citizens lavished their wealth on civic projects. Archaeological evidence shows that the baths remained in use until the eighth century, when they were destroyed by fire, leaving only the basement and first floor.

For today's visitor, all that can be seen are the baths' impressive foundations: a classical complex built around three principal rooms: *caldarium*, *tepidarium* and *frigidarium*. The impressive *palaestra* (wrestling court) is surrounded by a portico with 128 marble columns (32 on each side). Not a surprise to those who know how cold Ankara winters can be is the number of furnaces – 18 in all – that were required to keep the *caldarium* hot during the cold months.

Remains of ancient art and splendour are met at every step. This fine white marble sacrificial bull, from the 5th century AD, was one of a pair at the top of steps in the 'cella' of the Temple of Augustus (see page 96) when it was used as a storeroom for the infant Museum of Anatolian Civilisations. It now stands in a quiet corner of the museum garden



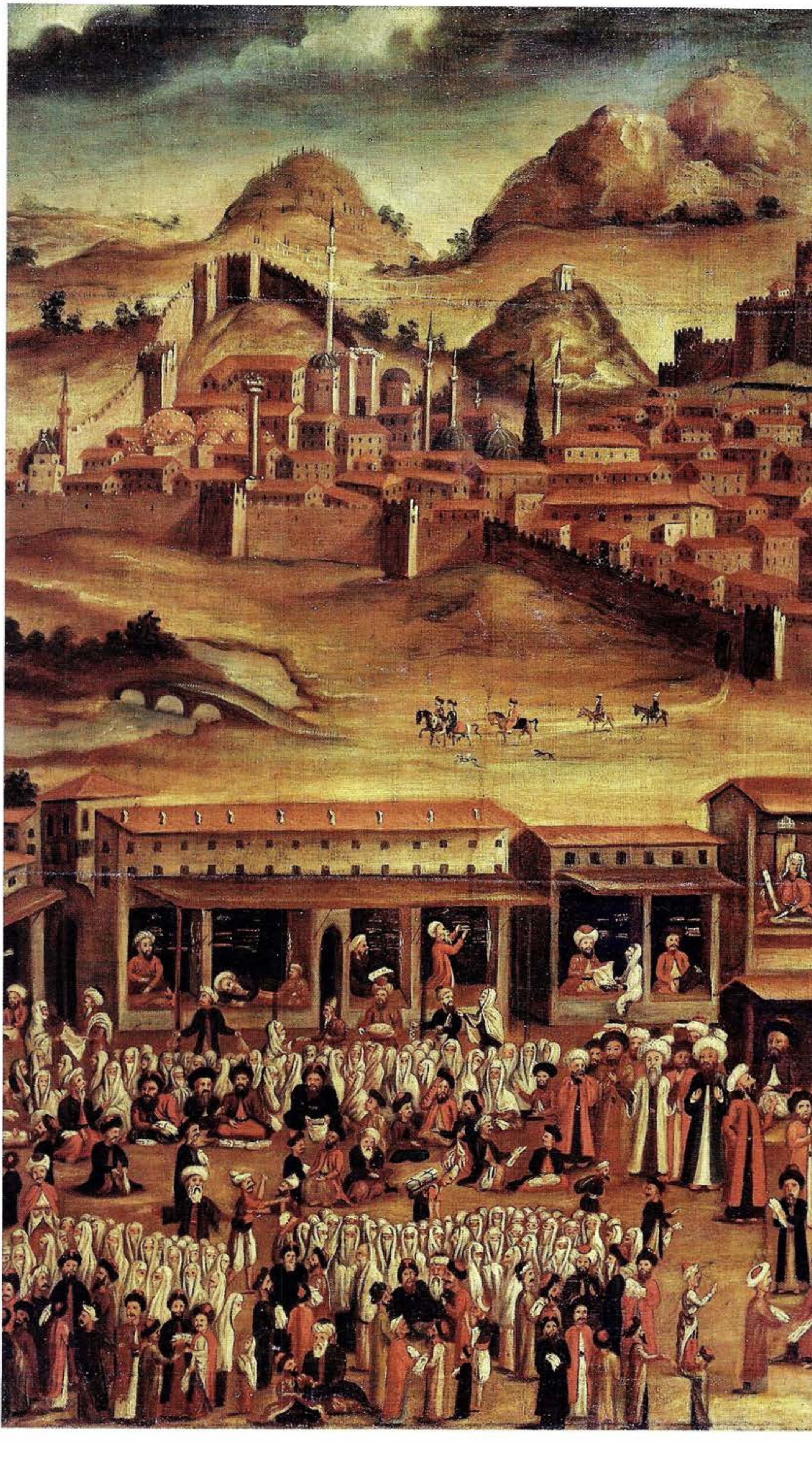
ANGORA REBORN

KALEİÇİ: THE TOWN WITHIN THE CITADEL WALLS

During an administrative reshuffle in 1522, the Citadel, or Kaleiçi, was separated from the Ottoman town. Until the First World War it continued to be the Christian quarter, where some of the konaks of Armenian merchants, who dealt initially in mohair and later in cotton, still survive. The ones most in need of urgent restoration are those built on the south-facing walls best seen from the extension of the At Pazarı (Horse Market).

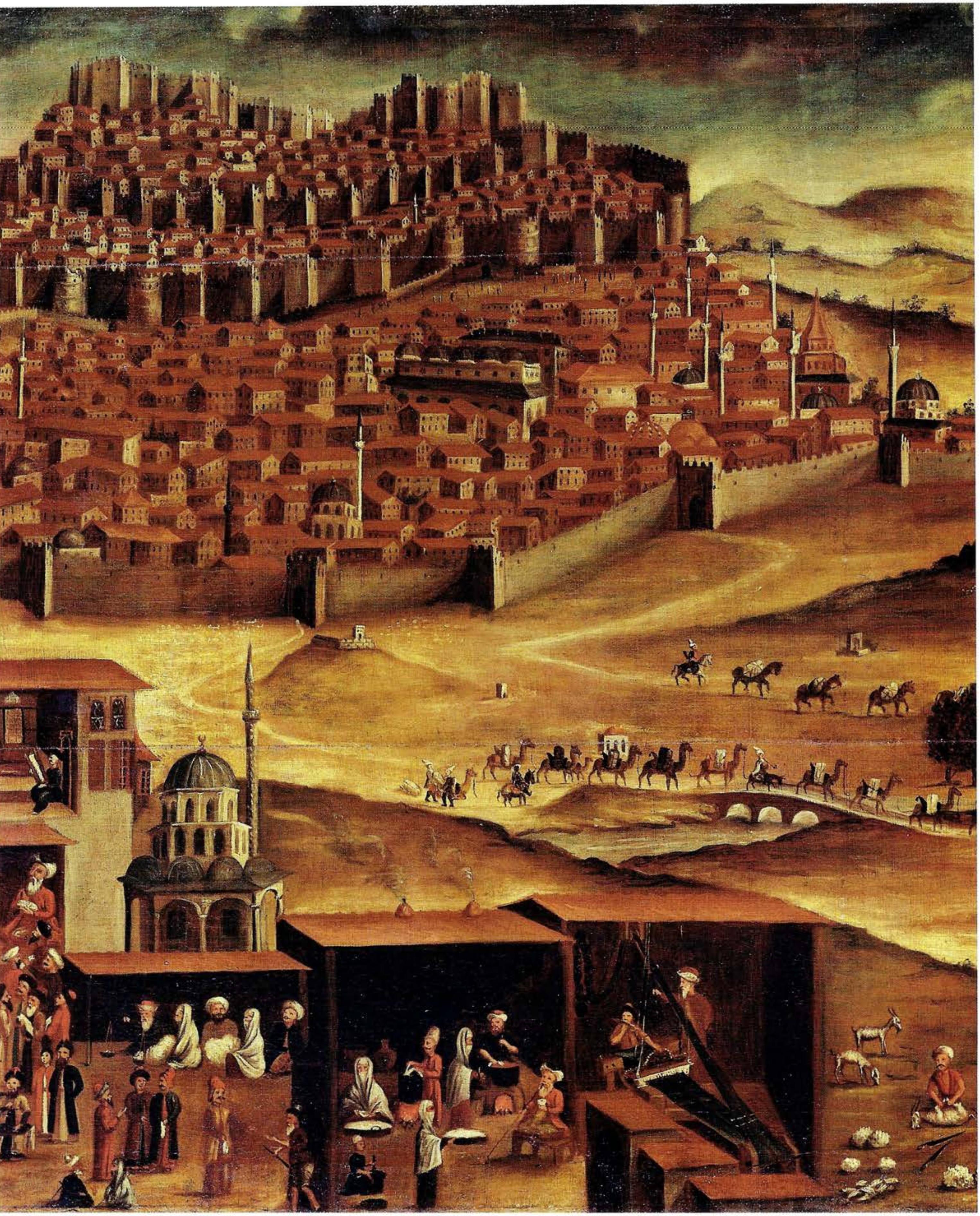
The rectangular Citadel, surrounded by seven gates and 40 turrets, 15 of them in the inner bailey, is a complex of inner and outer fortifications built within and around the cone of the volcano.

Perhaps unique in Anatolia, the Citadel continues to function as intended, providing shelter for a goodly section of the city's shifting populations. The demographic upheavals of the last decades of the 19th century, the First Balkan War in 1912, and the aftermath of the First World War affected all the ethnic communities crammed into the maze of alleys, connecting gardens and now-decaying merchant houses. But despite all this, and modern attempts to tidy it up, a village atmosphere survives.



ANGORA GOATS ARE SHEARED AND MERCHANTS TRADE IN AN 18TH-CENTURY DUTCH VIEW OF ANKARA, WHEN IT WAS STILL MOHAIR CAPITAL OF THE WORLD – THE HEIGHT OF THE CITY WALLS HAD BEEN RAISED AGAINST RAIDING TRIBES. IN 1810 THIS PAINTING HUNG IN THE CHAMBER OF THE DIRECTORATE OF LEVANTINE TRADE IN AMSTERDAM TOWN HALL. TODAY IT IS PART OF THE RE-CREATION OF THE CHAMBER AT THE AMSTERDAM MUSEUM

RIJKSMUSEUM AMSTERDAM

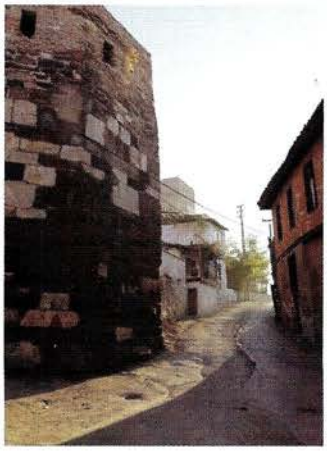


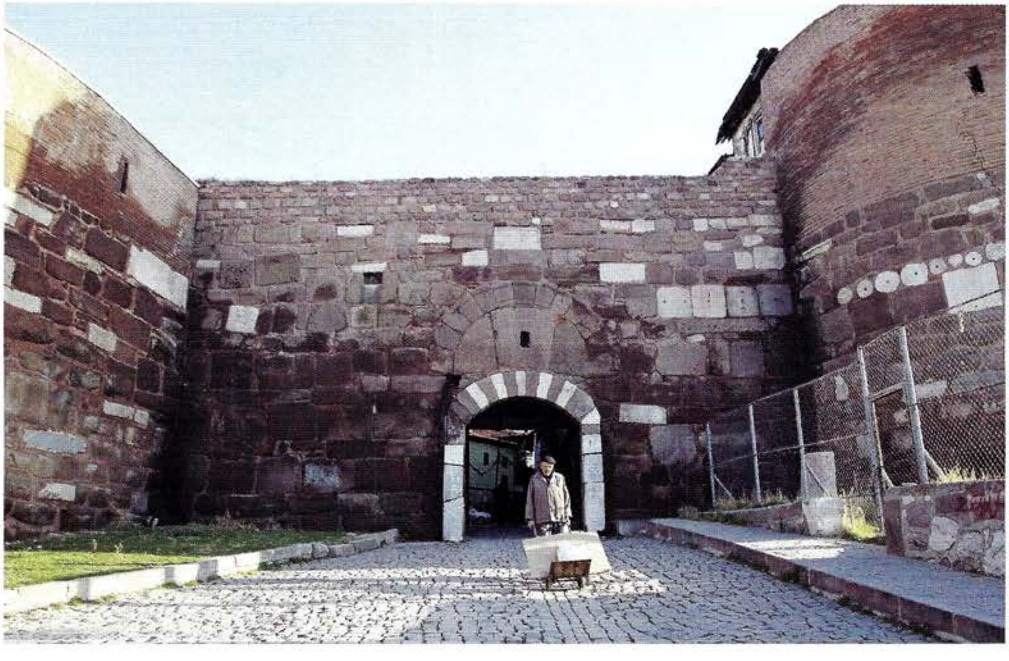
THE SOUTH GATE

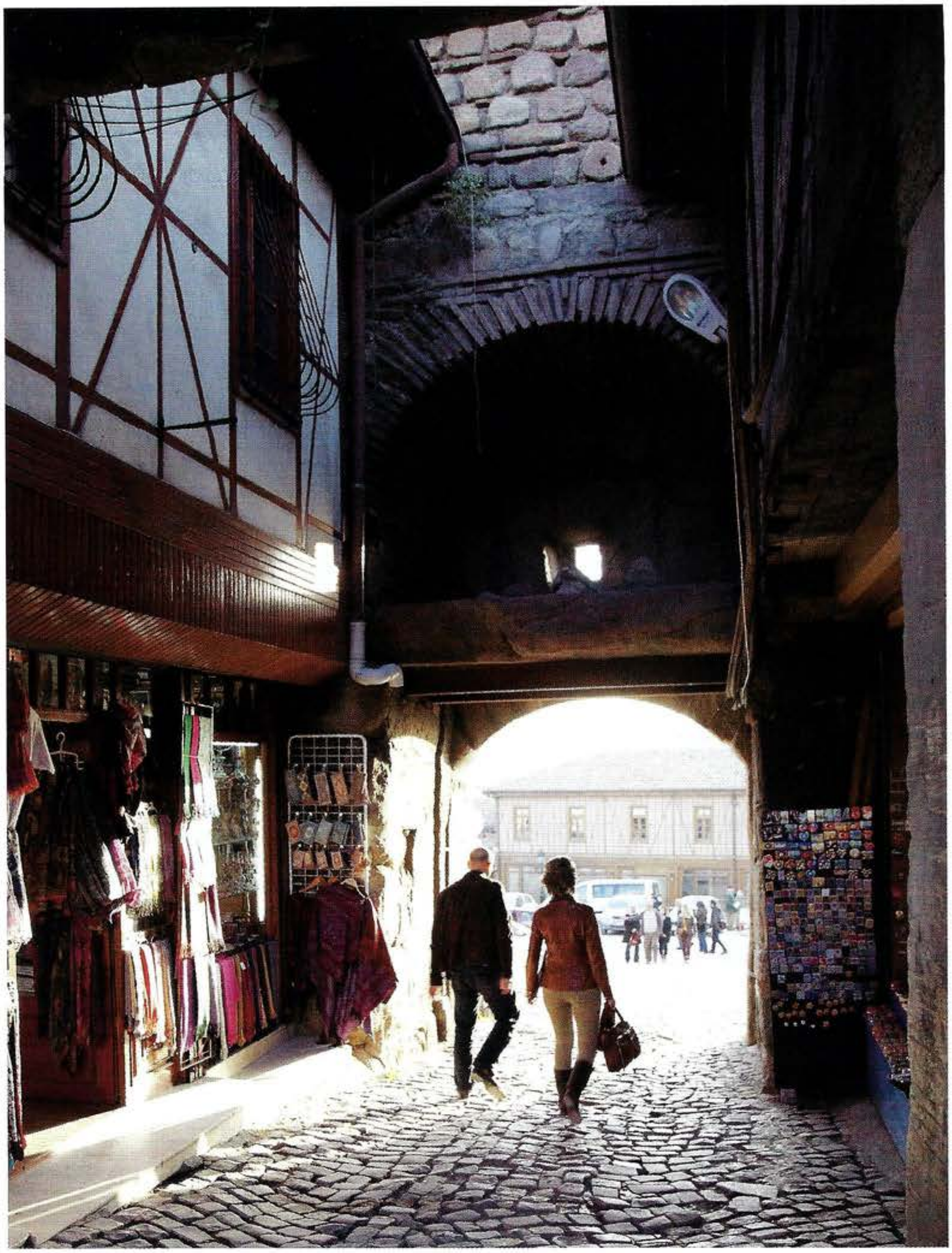
The Reverend Henry van Lennep, an American proselytiser born into a well-known Levantine Izmir family, whose first visit to Angora was in 1870, describes the main gate to the Citadel as "made up of fragments of old buildings, chiefly marble [where] a broken lion stands on each side". Surprisingly for one so observant, he missed the Persian inscription dated 1330 that hangs above it, declaring exemption from certain taxes in response to complaints from residents at the time when the Mongol (Persian-speaking) Ahi were in charge of the city.

Over the last 25 years, pockets of semi-abandoned areas have been adopted by "outsiders", who, bit by bit, have been trying to restore and convert the collapsing lath-and-plaster houses into restaurants and gift shops.

Below A garden beneath the Byzantine walls inside the Citadel. Despite all modern attempts to tidy it up, a village atmosphere persists **Bottom left** The walls are a rich resource for the epigrapher. Ancyra/Angora/Ankara has been a melting pot of incoming peoples since trade began **Bottom right** The Citadel's South Gate on At Pazari, the old Horse Market **Opposite** The South Gate from inside the Citadel leads the eye to the grand 17th-century pink-brick Çukurhan, now the Divan Çukurhan, where visitors are recommended to stay **Opposite, below** Koyunpazari Sokak, the old Sheep Market, leads away from the Citadel **Opposite, far right** A pair of newly restored lath-and-plaster Angora houses





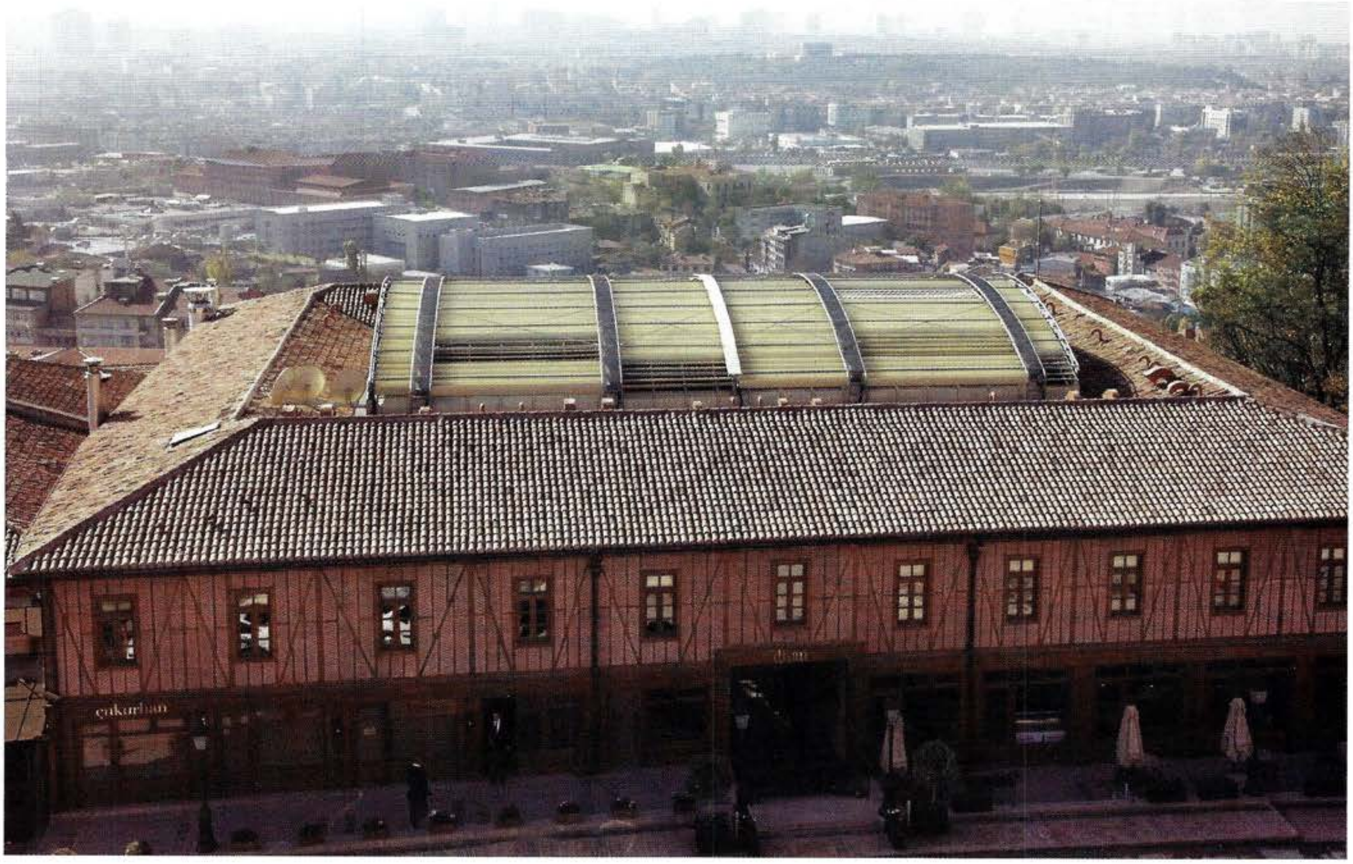


THE MAIN STREET

Van Lennep continued up "the steep streets paved with trachyte to the open space between the upper part of the town and the fortifications of the Castle". He remarked that "remains of ancient art and splendor are met at every step, more so than in any town I have visited in this land... but they are only fragments... no building has resisted the destructive effects of time". There is no mention of the dramatic right-angled dog-leg approach into the inner fortifications: the American cleric was no military historian.

The splendour he is referring to is the medley of massive stone blocks bolstered with marble column drums, carved capitals, ornate pediments and decorative fragments brought in haste from the ruined city by desperate citizens following the Persians' catastrophic sack during the first quarter of the seventh century. Invasions were to wrack Anatolia during the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries. This fortification of the Citadel with any useful piece of marble, brick or stone was a response to the first of the Arab attacks following the Persian success, which had left the Byzantines defenceless and unprepared.

It would take far more time than the visitor will have to figure out which parts of which classical buildings are embedded in the walls. A key inscription near the keep announces that following the second Arab invasion, in 859 AD, the walls were rebuilt by the Byzantine Emperor Michael III. But it must be left to the trained epigrapher to grapple with the bulk of often half-hidden Latin and Greek inscriptions on the embedded fragments.

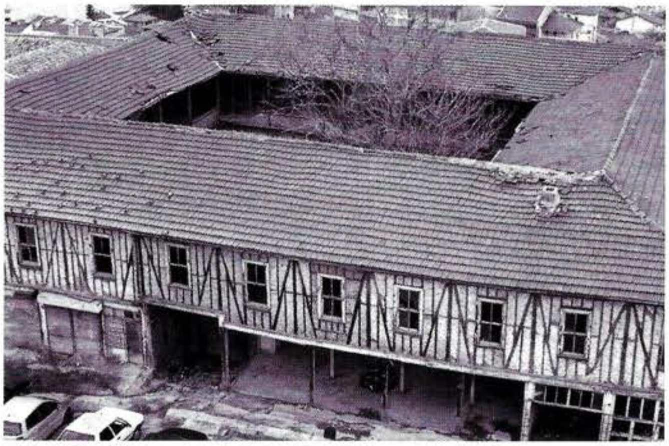


THE AT PAZARI

The heart of the Ottoman commercial quarter is the old Horse Market, the At Pazarı

Some dozen city caravanserais or *hans*, three of which now house outstanding museums, were built outside the South Gate within spitting distance of each other during the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. What induced the Ottomans to build these large and evidently expensive structures on the foundations of Roman Ancyra? Usually owned by charitable institutions, the *hans* were bonded warehouses, as well as lodgings patronised by visiting merchants there to buy, sell and store. They paid their dues accordingly and the owners turned a tidy profit.

Grain, leather, honey and dried fruits apart, the chief attraction was the increasingly profitable trade in a brand-new, strong, light, warm and enduringly beautiful fabric: mohair, known locally as *sof*. It was made from the long-fibred fleece of the Angora goat and became the major livelihood of Ankara in the 14th century, making the fortunes of its clothiers and the fraternity of craftsmen and traders known as the Ahi.



TOP THE 17TH-CENTURY BRICK-AND-PLASTER ÇUKURHAN, NOW A BOUTIQUE HOTEL WITH A PLEASING GLASSED-IN CENTRAL COURTYARD
ABOVE THE ÇUKURHAN BEFORE RENOVATION IN 2008

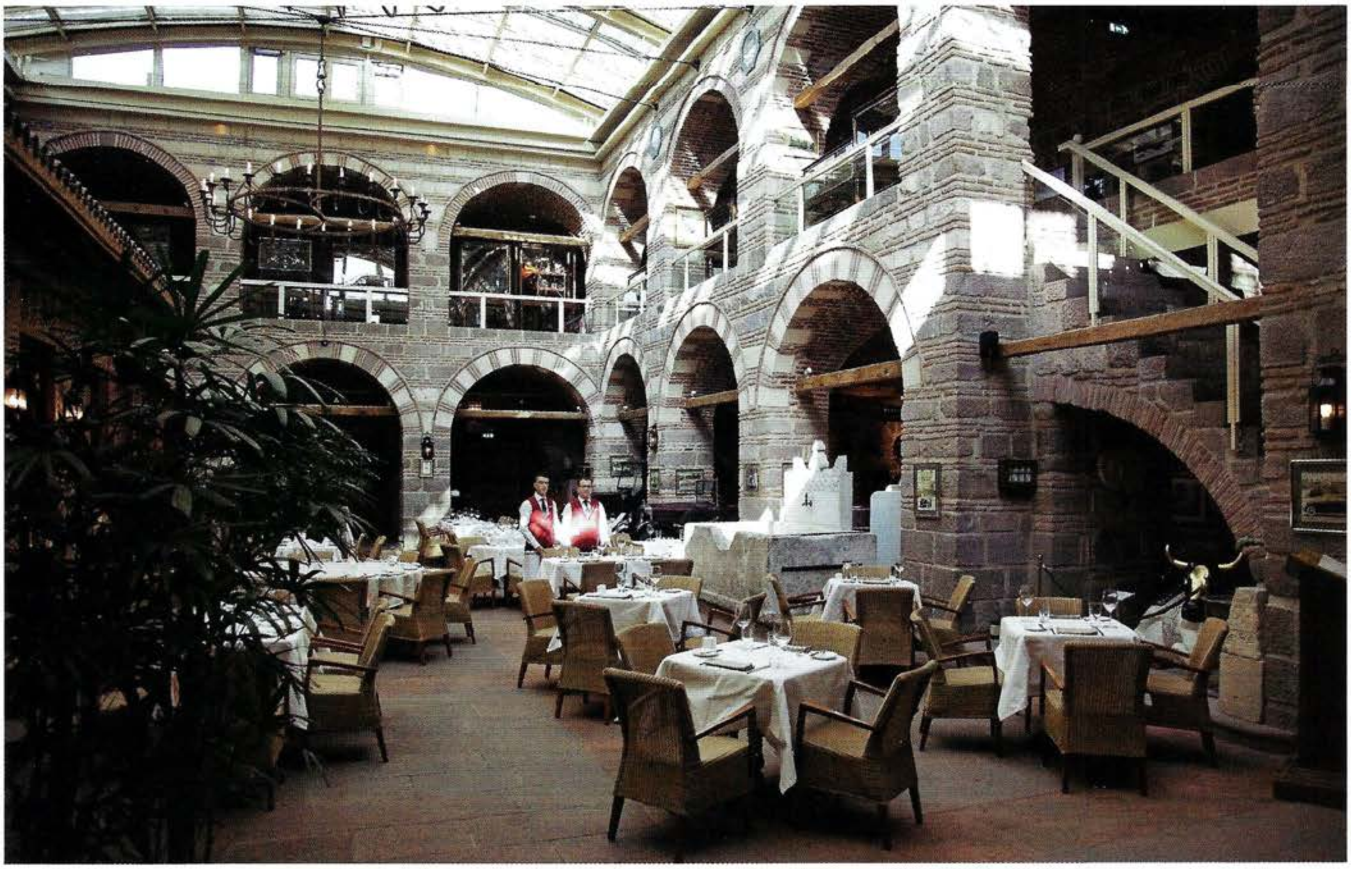
THE ÇUKURHAN

The Divan Çukurhan boutique hotel stands on the west side of the At Pazarı

Ankara's status as the important trading city it once had been is best demonstrated by the size and function of the enchanting (and newly restored) 17th-century pink-brick Çukurhan on the west side of the At Pazarı, directly opposite the South Gate, the main gate into the Citadel. On a prime site within metres of Roman Ancyra's third-century wall and standing on the Roman water pipe supplying the lower town, it remained in continuous use from the 17th century until the building caught fire in 1950, destroying the interior, the contents and the livelihoods of a hundred or more shopkeepers. Patched and propped, it limped on, harbouring traders in wool and grain for another four decades. Once the last of the struggling shopkeepers had closed his door in the late 1990s, the building was abandoned.

A decade later, a rotted, unstable ruin in danger of demolition, it was recognised as a building of enduring significance and placed on the 2007 World Monuments Fund's Watch List of the 100 Most Endangered Sites in the World. It was saved by Çengelhan Inc, a company of the Rahmi M Koç Foundation for Museology and Culture, which leased the *han* from the government on a 29-year basis.

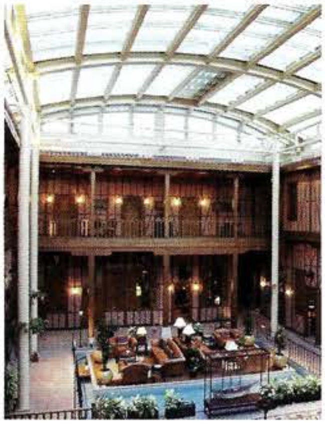
Meticulously renovated, stone by stone, brick by brick, over a period of more than two-and-a-half years, it has now re-emerged as the well-managed Divan Çukurhan boutique hotel. Its 19 rooms are ranged around a large courtyard, now covered in glass, allowing daylight to stream onto the warm, mottled raspberry of its brickwork.



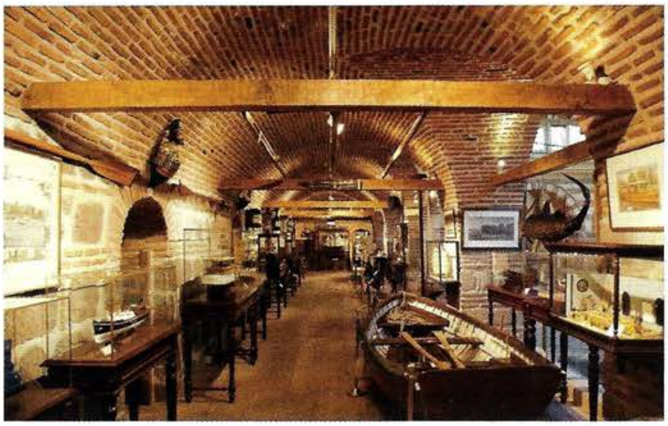
THE ÇENGELHAN

The At Pazarı's magnificent leather merchants' caravanserai is now the impeccably renovated Çengelhan Rahmi Koç Museum

The great beauty of the architecturally more important 16th-century Çengelhan, the leather merchants' caravanserai next to the Çukurhan on the west side of the At Pazarı, is the unity of its form. Its exterior presents to the world a solid brick and stone front. But its stern structure protects an interior that is as refined as it is functional, offering in its architecture a split personality that perfectly reflects the genius of its creator... who some say is Mimar Sinan himself. Endowed by Süleyman the Magnificent's son-in-law, the grand vizier Rüstem Pasha, and his favourite daughter, Mihrimah Sultan, an inscription in the spandrel above the entrance dates it to 1522–23. Worth visiting for the building itself, it houses a world-class museum boasting 14 different departments, 32 exhibition rooms and over 1,200 objects covering everything from transport, aviation and agriculture to medicine. And still there is room for more exhibits in the vast stables beneath the building, which in its heyday would have accommodated the merchants' pack animals.

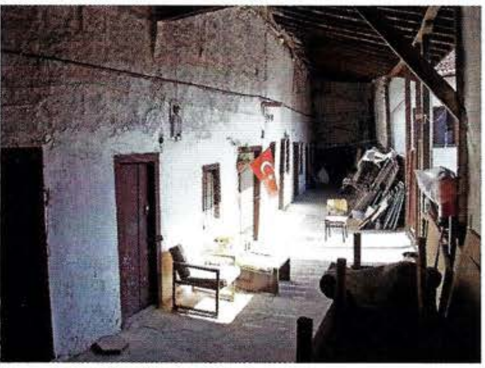


TOP THE 16TH-CENTURY STONE ÇENGELHAN AFTER CONVERSION INTO THE RAHMI M KOÇ MUSEUM. THE GLASSED-IN CENTRAL COURTYARD DOUBLES AS A BRASSERIE FOR THE MUSEUM, THE HOTEL AND THE VISITING BON VIVEUR
LEFT THE COURTYARD OF THE DIVAN ÇUKURHAN HOTEL
ABOVE A WELL-APPOINTED ROOM AT THE ÇUKURHAN
RIGHT MARITIME EXHIBITS IN THE ÇENGELHAN RAHMI M KOÇ MUSEUM

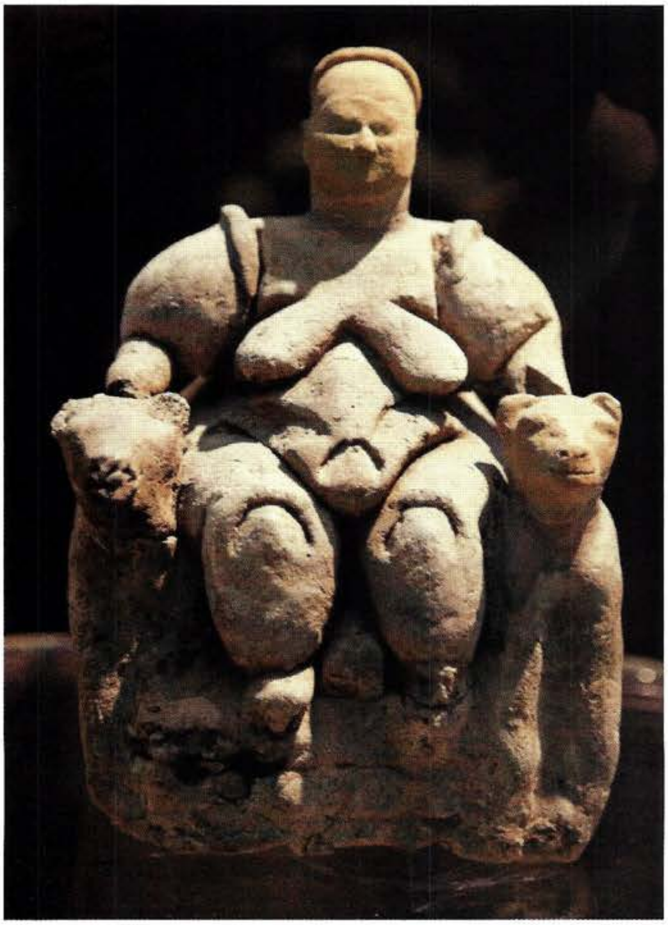


The Pilavoğlu Han

The only two-storey working *han* to retain its 17th-century form and two central gates is the Pilavoğlu Han. The miracle is that it has never burnt down and still resounds to the sound of artisans at work in 18 workshops around its central courtyard, which in summer is filled with sunshine and the scent of roses.



With its peaceful courtyard and limewashed adobe walls, the 17th-century Pilavovoğlu Han, on Hanlar Sokak (the Street of Hans), is one of Ankara's hidden jewels. The han still offers the traditional combination of ateliers and inexpensive accommodation



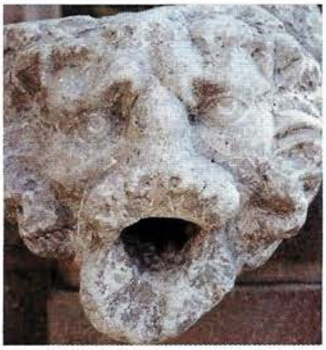
THE MUSEUM OF ANATOLIAN CIVILISATIONS

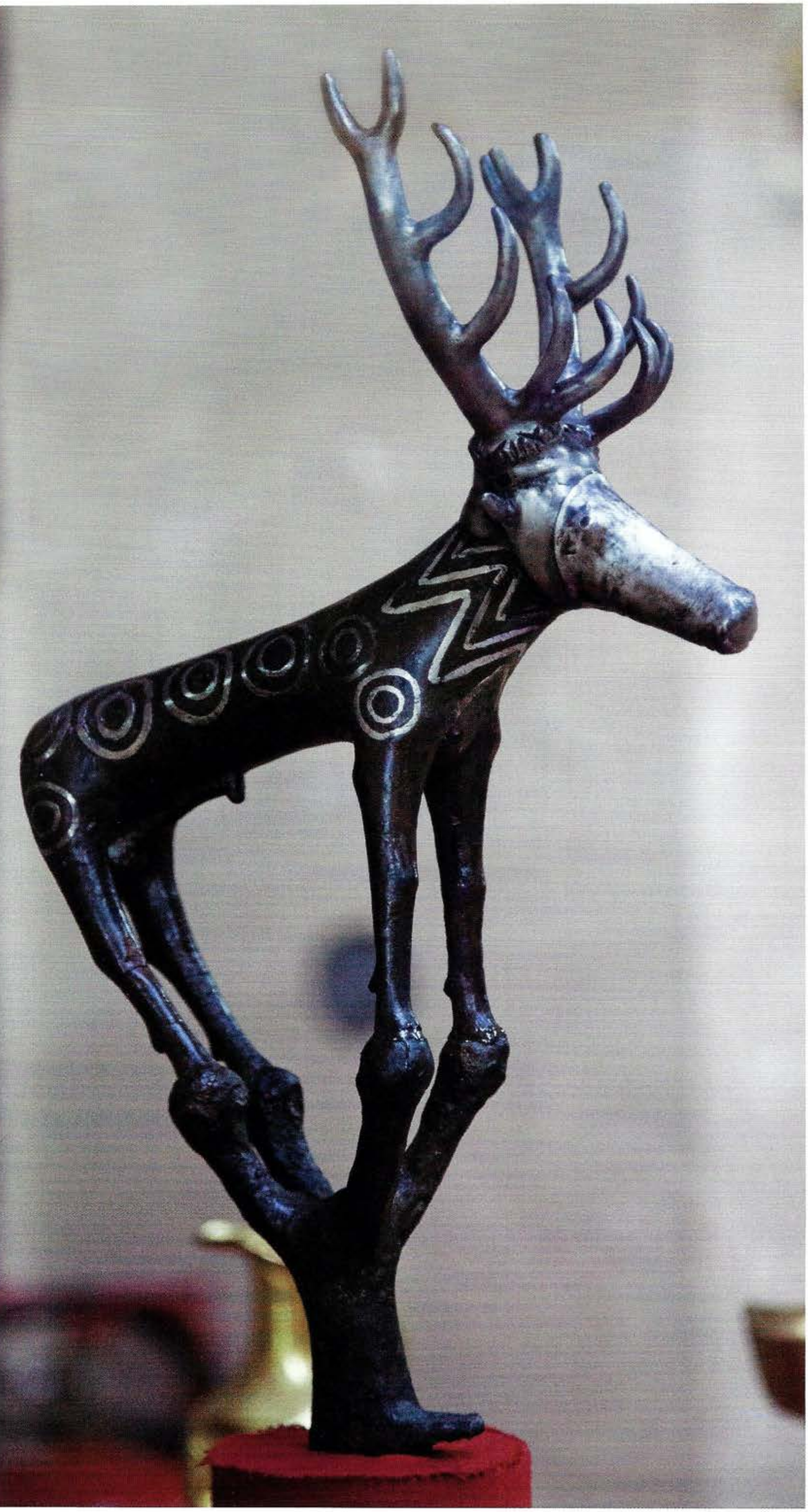
European Museum of the Year as long ago as 1997, the museum presents in chronological order an incomparable collection of Anatolian archaeology, from the Palaeolithic to the modern; this alone repays the effort of a visit to Ankara. It is housed in two 15th-century *hans*. Although neither building bears any inscription and both were put out of commission by the great fire of 1881, contemporary documents suggest that they were built between 1464 and 1471 by two of Mehmet the Conqueror's grand viziers to provide revenue for their charitable foundations in the new Ottoman capital, Istanbul, recently captured from the Byzantines.

It is worth examining the grand vizier Mahmut Pasha's stone *bedesten* (covered market), not just the objects displayed in it. There are 10 domes above a central courtyard surrounded on two sides by vaulted arcades, originally providing shops and safe storage for the bazaar's valuables. As a classical rectangle, it could be said that it was the Ottoman answer to the Roman Forum, which it overlooks, having been built into the steep hillside below the city walls.

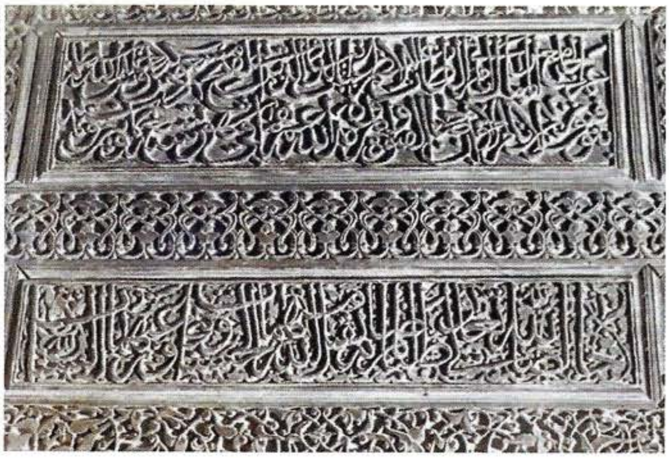
The square two-storey Kurşunlu Han beside it, built as an inn by another grand vizier, Mehmet Pasha, is now the administrative section of the museum. Arcades on two sides of a central courtyard housed 28 rooms on the ground floor and 30 on the second, all complete with fireplaces and stabling for visitors' horses, camels and mules.

Modern visitors who take their archaeology at all seriously should be warned to time their visit to the museum carefully: the odd busload of tourists causes little stir, but the laudable routine of visits by schoolchildren, brought in hordes to view the relics of their country's past, creates noise levels to rival any aviary.

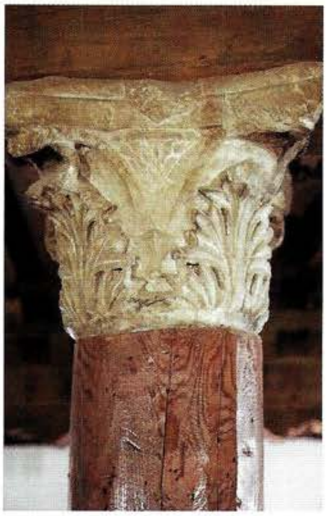


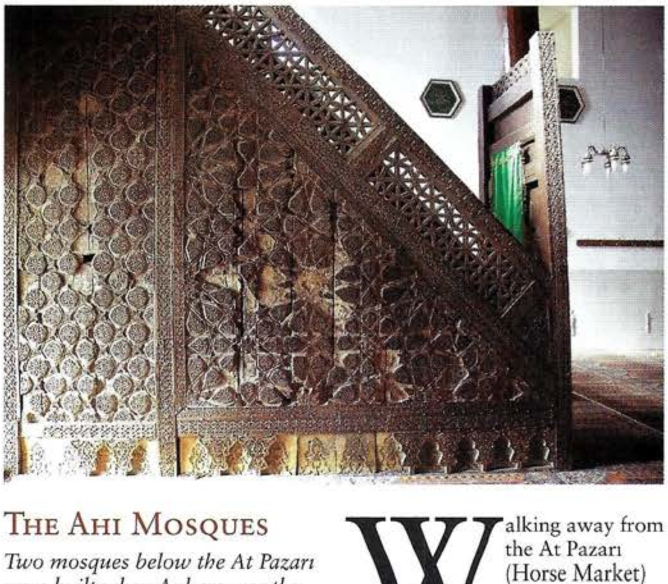


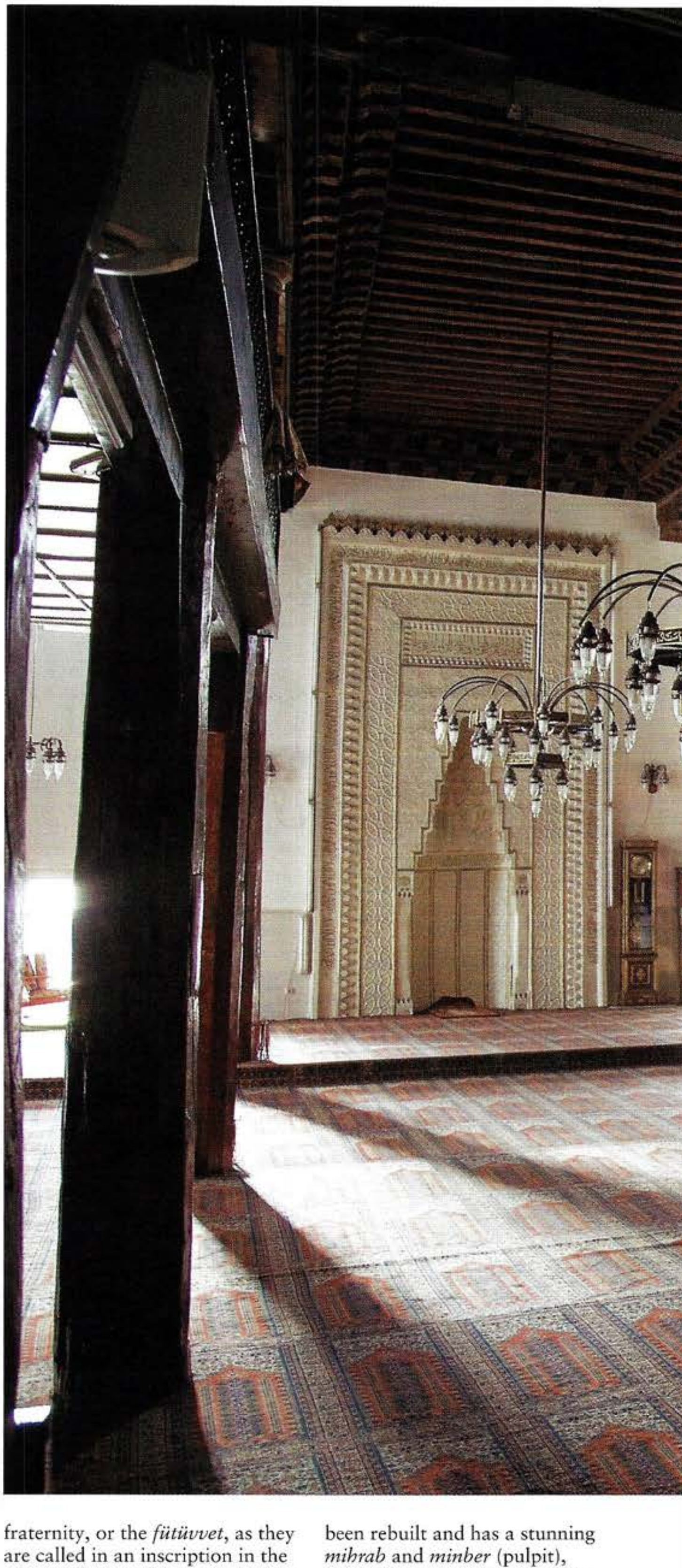
Opposite, top A Syro-Hittite relief from the 8th or 9th century BC, identifiable by the mitre-shaped headdress and fur-edged robe, probably one of a series intended as an ornament at the base of a wall. It was excavated in southern Turkey in the 1930s
Opposite, left An astonishing Neolithic statuette of the Mother Goddess from Çatalhöyük, c5750 BC
Opposite, bottom right A lion's-head spout from the Temple of Augustus
Left This mysterious 12-branched Hattian stag in bronze and silver was found during the 1930s excavation of the royal tombs at Alacahöyük. It was perhaps used as a standard for court ceremonials, and dates to c2300 BC
Below and bottom Two steers in copper, bound and inlaid with silver and electrian, from the tombs at Alacahöyük



ABDÜLKERIM ERDOĞAN



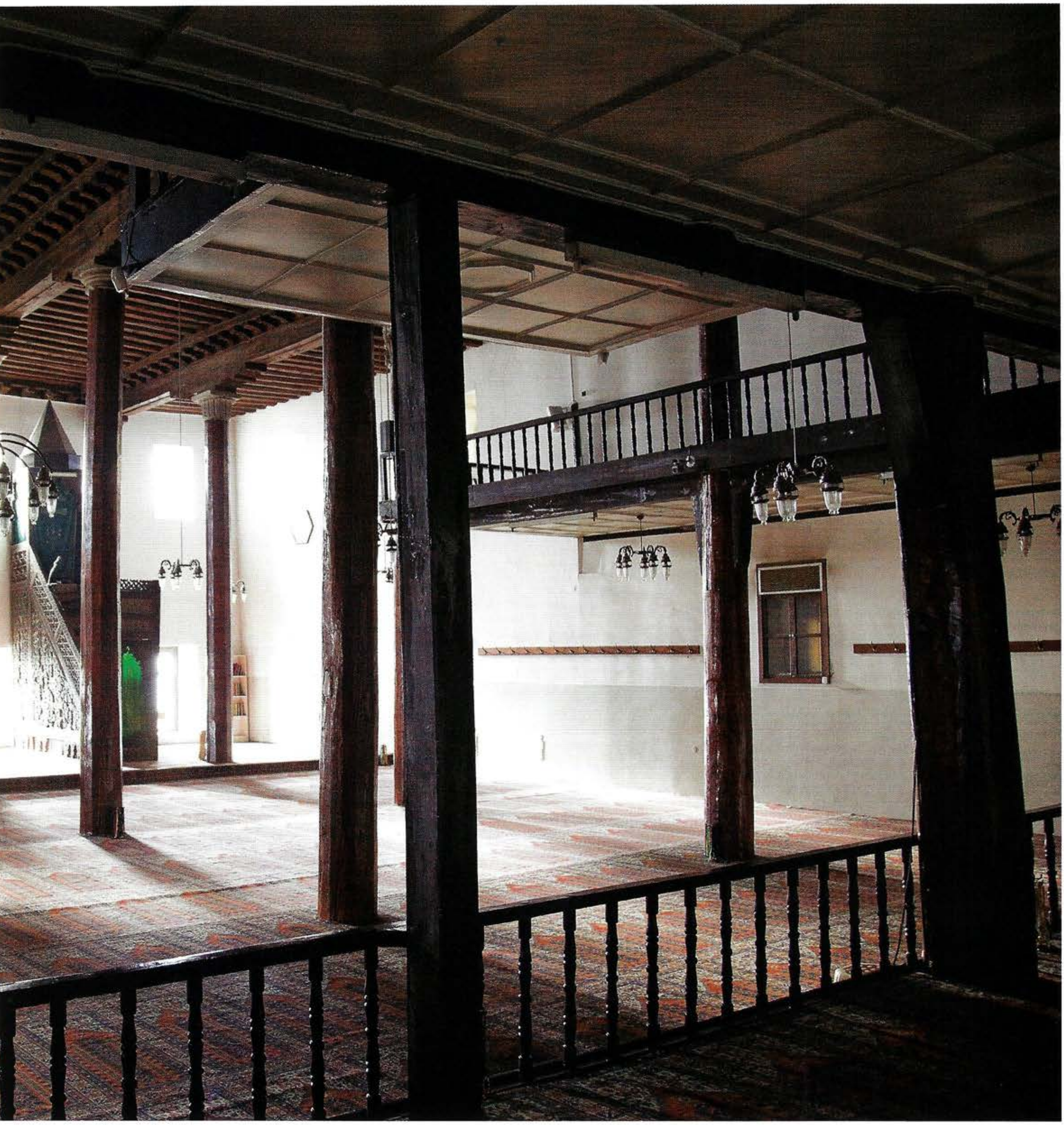




THE AHI MOSQUES

Two mosques below the At Pazarı were built when Ankara was the capital of the mohair trade and an independent city state

Walking away from the At Pazarı (Horse Market) down the picturesque streets lined with shops built among the ruins of the Roman town, two charming early mosques should not be missed. The Ahi Şerafettin Camii and Ahi Elvan Camii were dedicated to the Ahi fraternity, or the *fütüvvet*, as they are called in an inscription in the Ahi Şerafettin. Their enchantingly decorated wooden ceilings are both supported by 12 wooden columns topped with recycled Corinthian capitals. The present Ahi Elvan Camii is an early-15th-century restoration. The Ahi Şerafettin (also known as the Aslanhane Camii) dates to 1290; it has not been rebuilt and has a stunning *mihrab* and *minber* (pulpit), though it is currently closed for restoration. This is a reminder that, for over a century following the break-up of the Seljuk Empire, the semi-religious Ahi set up their own independent city state in Ankara, broadly comparable to a medieval mercantile republic in northern Europe.



The Ahi were one of many fraternities springing up among Türkmen settlers in medieval Anatolia. At a time when the wool trade was of immense importance they raised a uniquely valuable long-haired goat. These delicate animals, difficult to keep in damp climates, flourished on the dry plains about Ankara. Good husbandry, perhaps allied to local

ABOVE DEDICATED TO THE AHI BROTHERHOOD, THE AHI ELVAN MOSQUE, WITH ITS 12 WOODEN COLUMNS, WAS RESTORED IN THE EARLY 15TH CENTURY. IT TAKES ITS NAME FROM AHI ELVAN MEHMET BEY (1331–89)
OPPOSITE, TOP THE INSCRIPTION IN THE MINBER OF THE NEXT-DOOR AHI ŞERAFETTIN MOSQUE, STOLEN FROM THE MOSQUE A DECADE AGO AND STILL MISSING. WE KNOW FROM IT THAT THE MOSQUE WAS BUILT BY AHI ŞERAFETTIN'S FATHER AND UNCLE IN 1289–90
OPPOSITE, MIDDLE ROW THE STUNNING MIHRAB OF THE AHI ŞERAFETTIN MOSQUE WITH ITS TURQUOISE, AUBERGINE AND BLACK TILES AND CARVED PLASTERWORK (LEFT).
ONE OF THE AHI ELVAN MOSQUE'S RECYCLED ANTIQUE MARBLE CORINTHIAN CAPITALS (RIGHT)
OPPOSITE, BOTTOM THE AHI ELVAN MOSQUE'S FINELY WORKED WALNUT MINBER MAY HAVE BEEN INSTALLED DURING THE 15TH-CENTURY RESTORATION

breeding methods, produced a singular long-horned goat with an exceptionally curly coat that was to become universally known as the Angora goat. Shorn in spring, a yearling's fleece was even finer than a two-year-old's; when spun and woven, it produced *camlet*, or mohair, an enduringly beautiful fabric that resembled silk in its fineness but was tough and warm. The raw mohair was first washed, then homespun on wooden spindles before being dyed, stretched and sized. The finished article was fit for sultans and commanded exceptional prices.

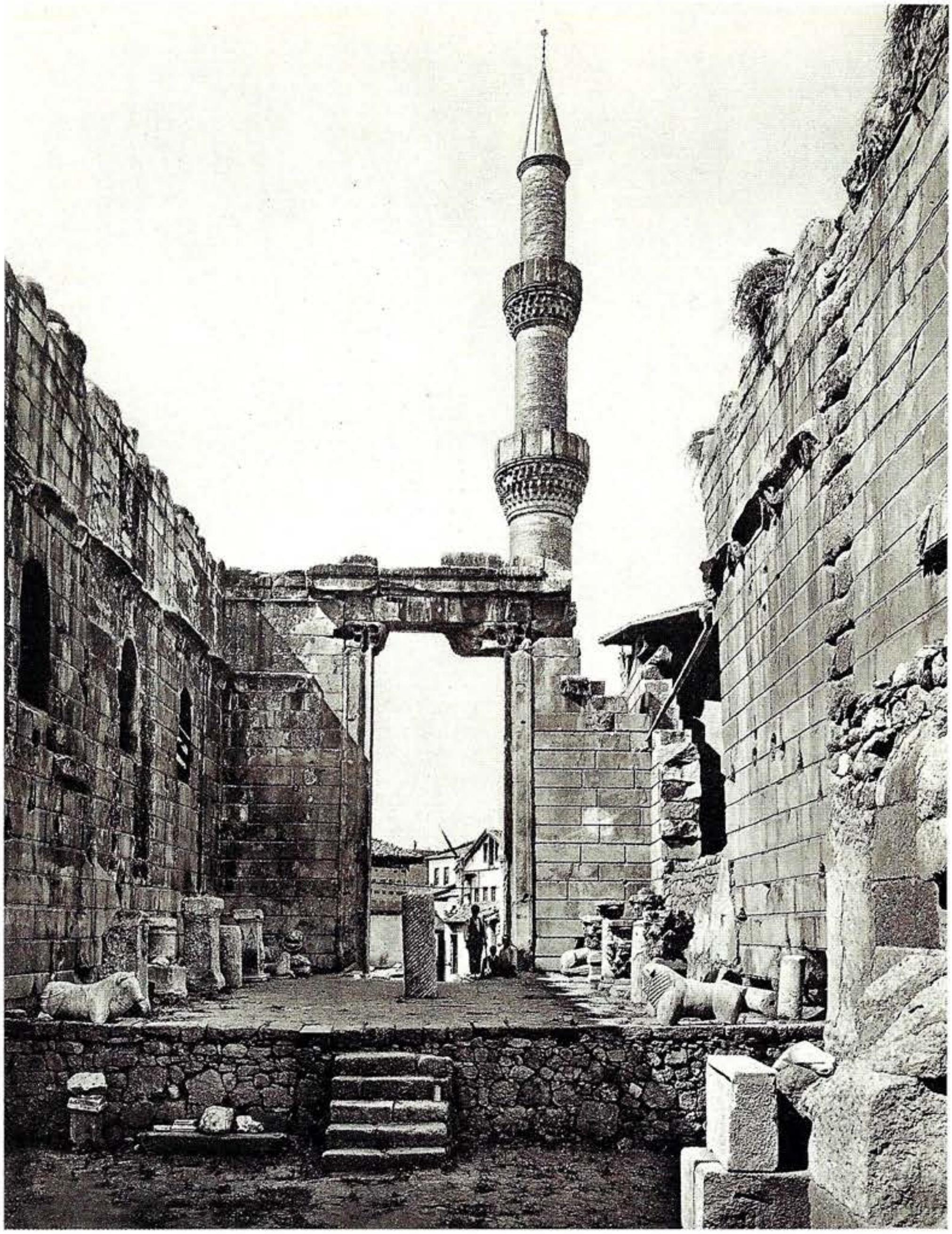
By the mid-15th century, outsiders were moving into Angora to cash in on the new trade: silk weavers from Bursa and merchants from Venice, the Netherlands and Poland handled the international trade, shipping fabrics from Smyrna and Istanbul to Venice, Amsterdam and the Port of London. A *bedesten* (covered market) – now the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations – was built by one of Mehmet the Conqueror's grand viziers. European travellers started to visit the city. The French diplomat Busbecq left the first eyewitness account of the dyeing of "a cloth made of goat's wool", noting that "the better sort of Turk in their old age is usually clothed with this sort of cloth. Süleyman [the Magnificent] himself used to wear wefts of it..."

By 1590 the population of Ankara was said to number 16,000; annual mohair production had reached 100,000 bolts; and there were over 600 looms in 2,200 homes built along the narrow streets below the Citadel and starting to cover the southern hillside.

Strict enforcement of the export ban on raw, or even spun, mohair had ensured that the value added by turning it into one of the civilised world's most sought-after fabrics benefited the city alone. It seems to have been the English who first succeeded in breaching the monopoly. And then the goats themselves were successfully established in America, South Africa and Australia. By the time the spinning jenny made any cloth woven by wooden spindles uneconomic, Angora was already in decline.

By the time the railway arrived in 1892, Angora had been largely superseded in all aspects of the mohair trade, even the market for the raw material. Bad harvests and malaria took their toll; frequent fires swept through the overcrowded trading quarters; unemployment inevitably led to a decline in population. Despite its strategic importance during the War of Independence – at one stage the roar of the fighting could be heard from the Citadel – Angora was by 1923 a poor place awaiting another transformation.

The resurgence came with the transfer of the seat of government from Istanbul: not for the first but for the third time, the city became a capital. ◆



ABOVE THE 'CELLA' OF THE TEMPLE OF AUGUSTUS, FROM DANIEL KRENCKER AND MARTIN SCHEDE'S BOOK 'DER TEMPEL IN ANKARA' (1936). AT THE TIME, ANTIQUITIES NOW ON VIEW IN THE MUSEUM OF ANATOLIAN CIVILISATIONS WERE STORED HERE. BEYOND IT IS THE MINARET OF THE HACI BAYRAM MOSQUE OPPOSITE THE MOSQUE'S 18TH-CENTURY KÜTAHYA TILES

Ankara
Travel Notes

Ankara can justifiably take pride in both its past and its present achievements. Today's burgeoning city has expanded in all directions, its Citadel often disregarded. Still a city of incoming peoples, much as it was in the early days of Roman Ancyra and Ottoman Angora, modern Ankara has a population approaching four million. Three days, staying in the Citadel, a quarter enjoying a late renaissance, in the comfort of an Ottoman caravanserai restored to its original purpose of receiving travellers, there is little chance of disappointment.

Where to stay

Divan Çukurhan boutique hotel, a great pink-brick 17th-century Ottoman caravanserai opposite the Citadel's South Gate, opened its doors to guests last summer, after a meticulous restoration lasting almost three years.
At Pazarı, Ankara Kalesi, Ulus, Ankara; +90 312 306 6400
info.divancukurhan@divan.com.tr

Angora House is a pair of traditional 17th-century lath-and-plaster Ankara houses within the (more or less) pedestrianised Citadel, beautifully restored to provide eight good bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms.
Kalekapısı Sk 16, Eski At Pazarı Mevkii, Ankara; +90 312 309 8380
www.angorahouse.com.tr

Where to eat

For a welcome break, the **Çengelhan Brasserie** provides traditional Turkish fare and smiling service within the glazed 16th-century courtyard of the Rahmi M Koç Museum. It stays open, candlelit, after the museum closes.
At Pazarı, Ankara Kalesi, Ulus, Ankara; +90 312 309 6800, ext 427
www.divan.com.tr/TR/restaurants

The Washington Restaurant
Two traditional merchant houses built into the Byzantine walls, with panoramic views over the city, were transformed in the 1980s into this first-class restaurant. Since the owners' arrival from Çamlıhemşin in the early days of the Republic, a succession of Washington Restaurants has maintained their fame for meze and Black Sea sweetmeats.
Doyuran Sk 5/7, Kaleiçi, Ankara; +90 312 311 4344
www.washingtonrestaurant.com.tr

Shopping

Ankara, being off the beaten track, is a more affordable spot for kilims and knotted rugs than Cappadocia. Bolts of cloth, sheepskins and fur pelts, dried fruits and nuts, and tin and copper utensils are just a few of the cornucopia of goods to be found in the cobbled streets below the At Pazarı. For the beautiful filigree work unique to Beypazarı, visit the ateliers attached to the Divan Çurkurhan on the At Pazarı. There is more to buy here than meets the eye. Ankara is also an important wine producer. Kavaklıdere is the long-standing giant. Vinkara, at Kalecik, a 45-minute drive from the airport, has swept the board with its wines after just seven years, including Turkey's first *méthode champenoise* sparkler, Yaşasın (see Kevin Gould's wine review).

Where to go

Museum of Anatolian Civilisations (Anadolu Medeniyetleri Müzesi)
Housed in two 15th-century Ottoman *bedestens*, this is a gem of a museum for people who take their archaeology seriously, covering everything from 6000 BC Çatalhöyük to Roman Ancyra.
Çankaya Hisar Cad 2, Ankara; open 8.30–5; +90 312 324 3160

Museum of Painting and Sculpture Newly reopened, housed in a fine 1920s building.
Opera Meydanı, Ulus, Ankara;
+90 312 310 2094

Karacabey Hamam offers both men and women baths in pretty, working 15th-century hamams.
Hamamönü, Ankara;
info@karacabeyhamami.com

Day trips

East of Ankara

Yazılıkaya, Alacahöyük and the ancient Hittite capital of Hattusas (near the modern village of Boğazkale) should not be missed. The importance of these three sites is demonstrated in the Museum of Anatolian Civilisations.

Southwest of Ankara
(off the Eskişehir road)

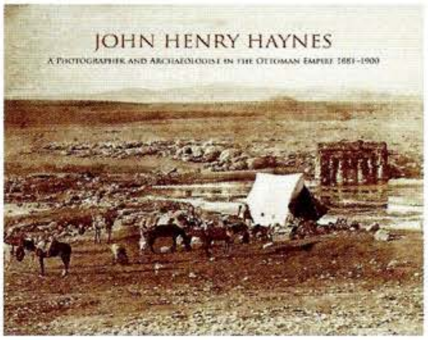
The ancient Phrygian capital of Gordion – which gave its name to the famed Gordian Knot – is well worth a visit. It is in the modern village of Yassıhöyük, near Polatlı. The beautiful countryside and rock-cut monuments of the Phrygian highlands lie to the west.

Northwest of Ankara
(on the old Istanbul road)

Two ancient towns not to be missed are Beypazarı and Nallıhan. Beypazarı – ancient Lagonia, known in Roman times as Anastasiopolis before it became Beypazarı, an important Ottoman military base – is renowned for its silver filigree (see Cornucopia 28) and a crystal mineral known as trona, used for glass-blowing. Further along this pretty, once well-used section of the Silk Road is Nallıhan, where recent excavation is revealing a magnificent Roman city. This ancient settlement, known for its cuisine, needlework and caravanserai, has an important bird sanctuary and is a rich area for rice-growing.

Further reading

- Aside from *The Rough Guide* and the *Blue Guides* – both excellent, informative reads – Ernst Mamboury's 1933 *Tourist Guide of Ankara* remains a fount of knowlege.
- Indispensable for the Roman specialist is *Roman Ancyra*, by Stephen Mitchell, Musa Kadıoğlu and Kutalmış Görkay, based on the study they undertook of the city between 2002 and 2007.
- For the numismatist, the richness of Ancyra's coinage from 64 BC until the break-up of Rome can be explored in the catalogue *The Civic Coinage of Ankara* and *The Coin Mints of Ancyra in Galatia*, by Melih Arslan.
- For Ankara in the early Republic, don't miss Ann Bridge's *The Dark Moment* (Bloomsbury).


JOHN HENRY HAYNES
A PHOTOGRAPHER AND ARCHAEOLOGIST IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE 1881–1900

- *John Henry Haynes: Archaeologist and Photographer in the Ottoman Empire 1881–1900*, by Robert G Ousterhout (Cornucopia Books, £20) includes Haynes's 1884 images of Ankara, and the first photographs taken of Cappadocia, Phrygia and Konya, all places that can be combined with a trip to Ankara.

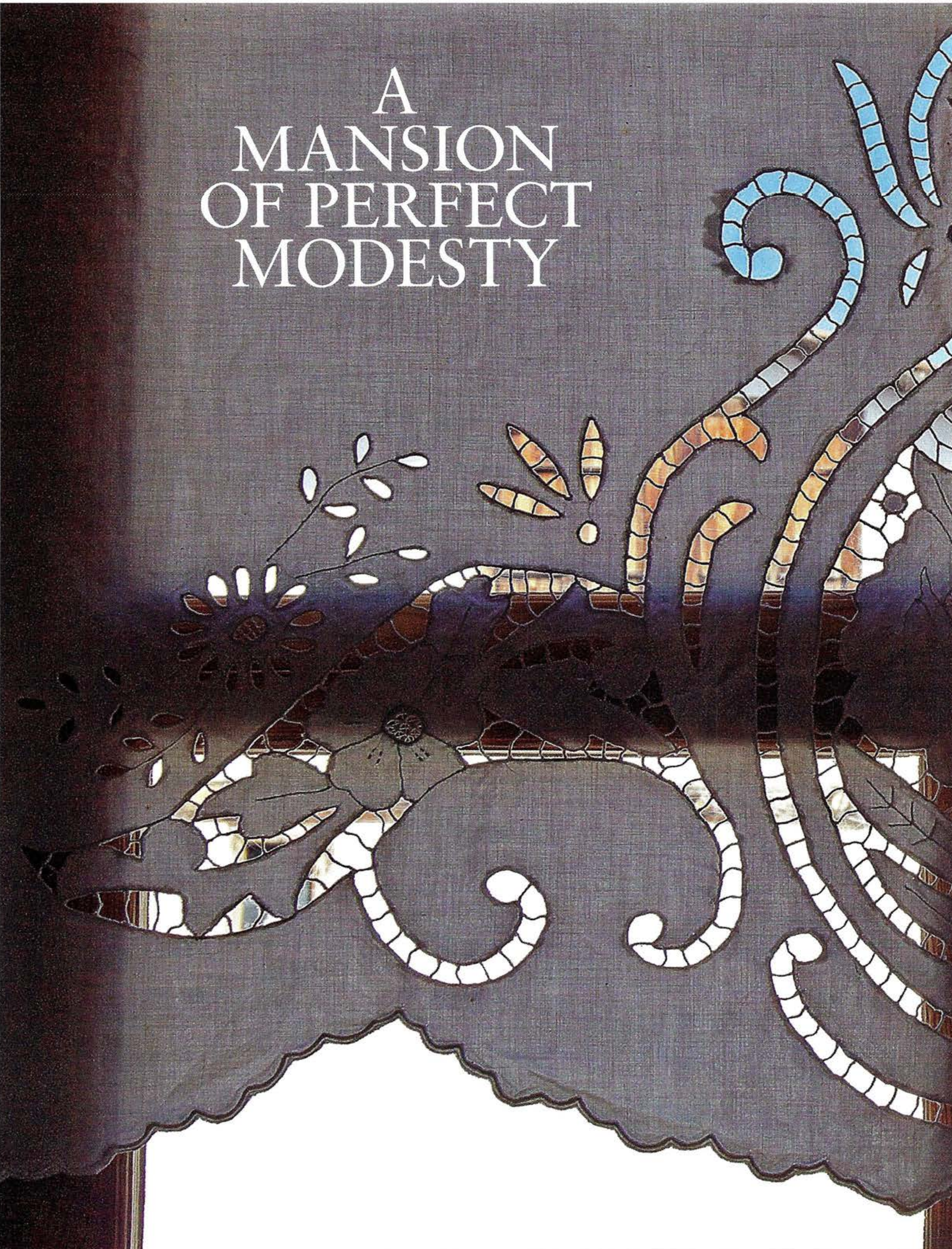
Cornucopia 39

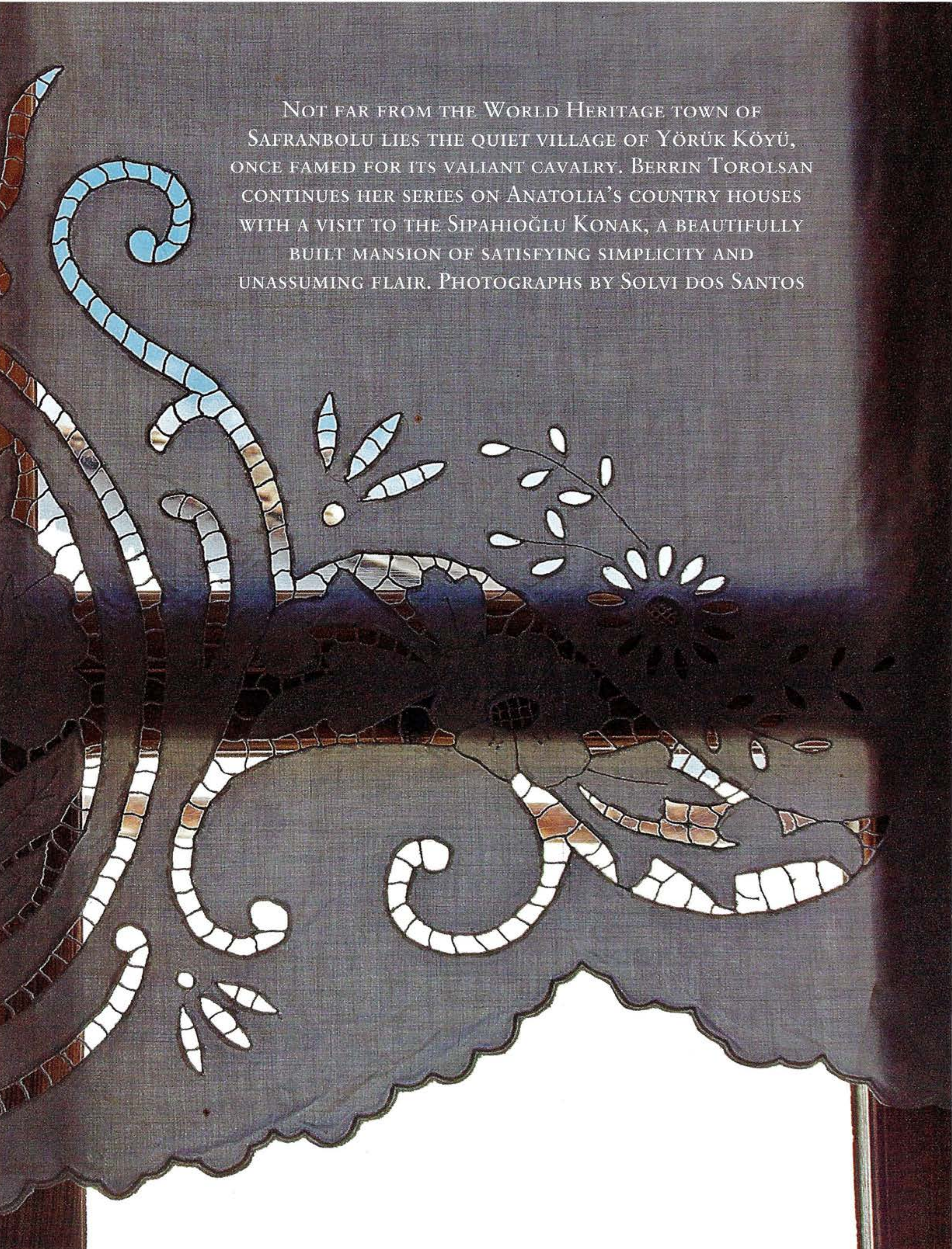
includes a portrait of Ankara's impressive 1930s embassies by Patricia Daunt and the photographer Fritz von der Schulenburg; Norman Stone on Ankara's rebirth; and David Barchard's day out among the rock tombs of the Phrygian highlands.

For full online listings of sights, hotels, books and back issues, visit www.cornucopia.net/ankara
For hotel reservations, go to www.cornucopiahotels.com

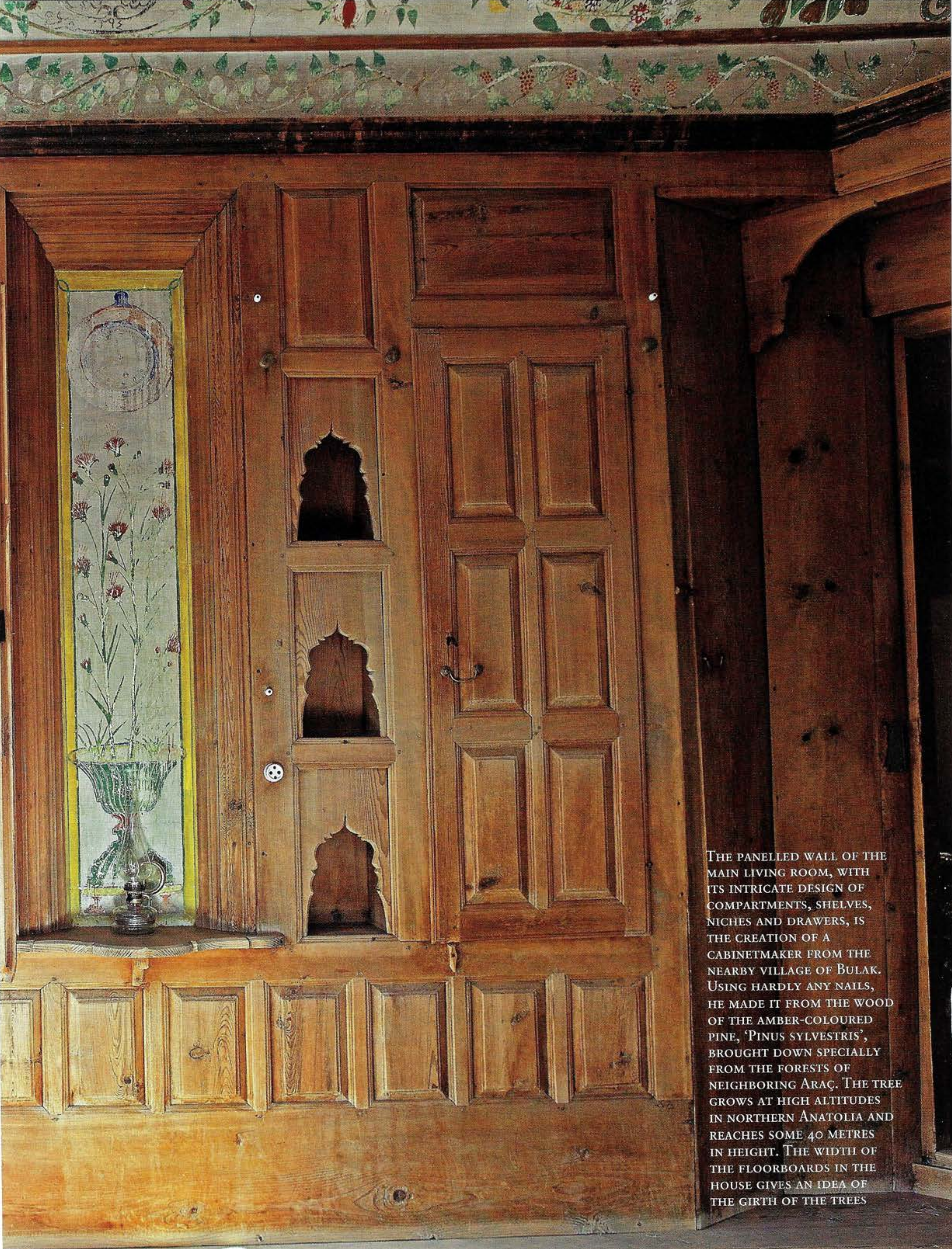
The author wishes to thank Barbara Ther, Dr Mine Sofuoğlu of the Çengelhan Rahmi M Koç Museum, Sylwia Dal of the Çukurhan Divan Boutique Hotel, Prof. Zeynep Önen, director of VEKAM, Dr Hasan Sinan Sülüner, the Friends of the Ankara Castle Society (Ankara Kalesi Derneği) and Dr Julia Lenaghan of the Ashmolean Museum for their help in preparing this article.

A MANSION OF PERFECT MODESTY

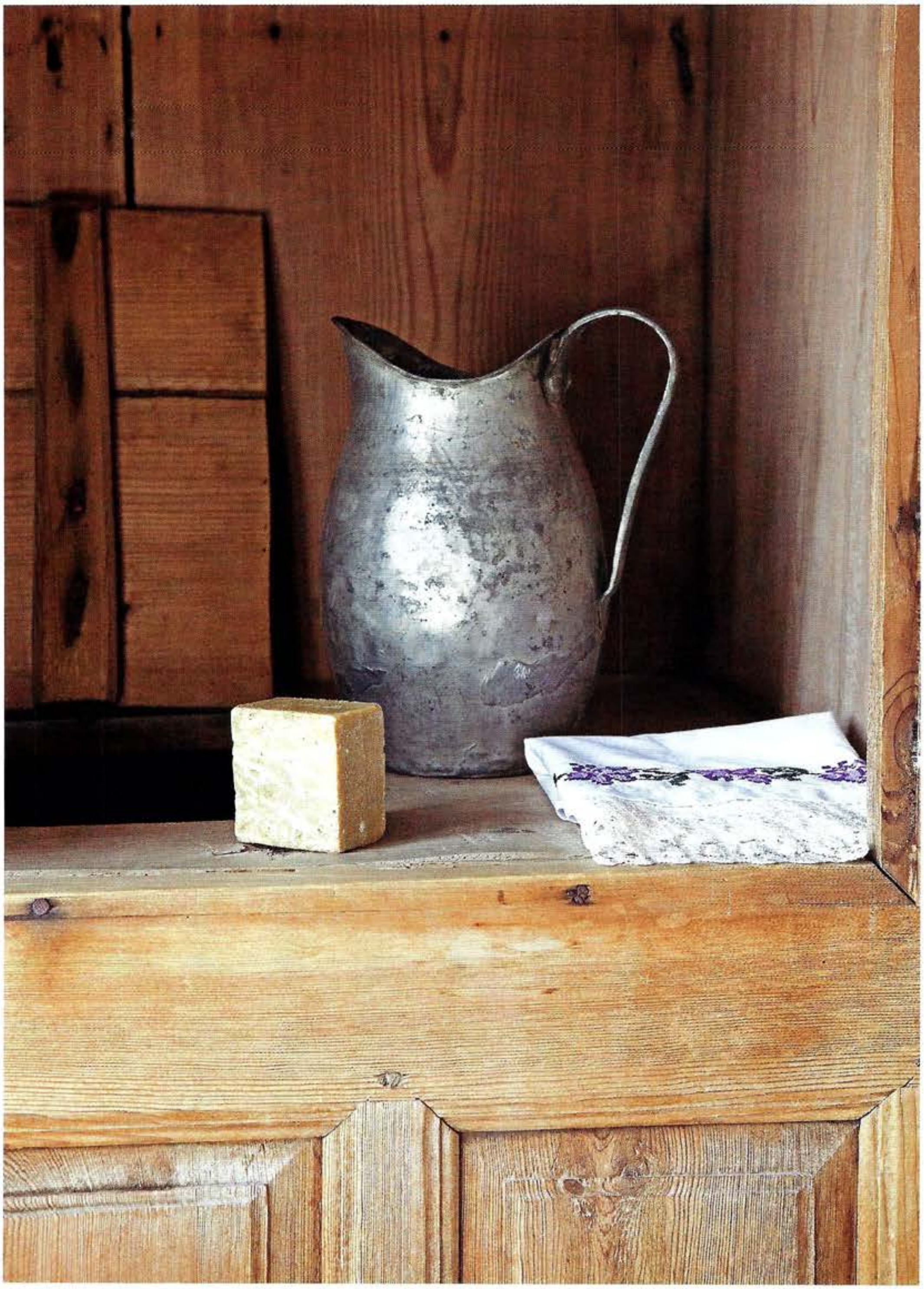




Not far from the World Heritage town of Safranbolu lies the quiet village of Yörük Köyü, once famed for its valiant cavalry. Berrin Torolsan continues her series on Anatolia's country houses with a visit to the Sipahioğlu Konak, a beautifully built mansion of satisfying simplicity and unassuming flair. Photographs by Solvi dos Santos

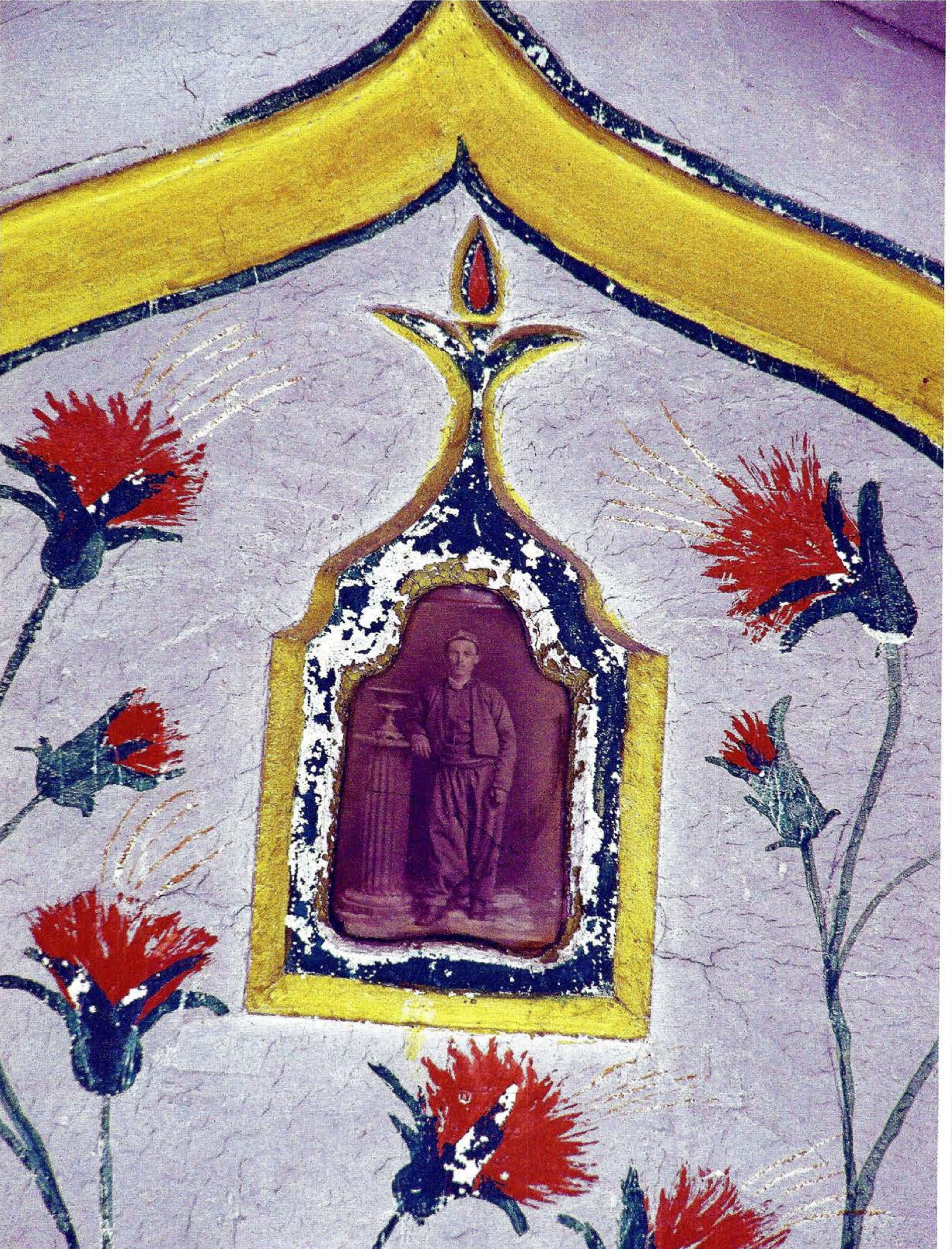


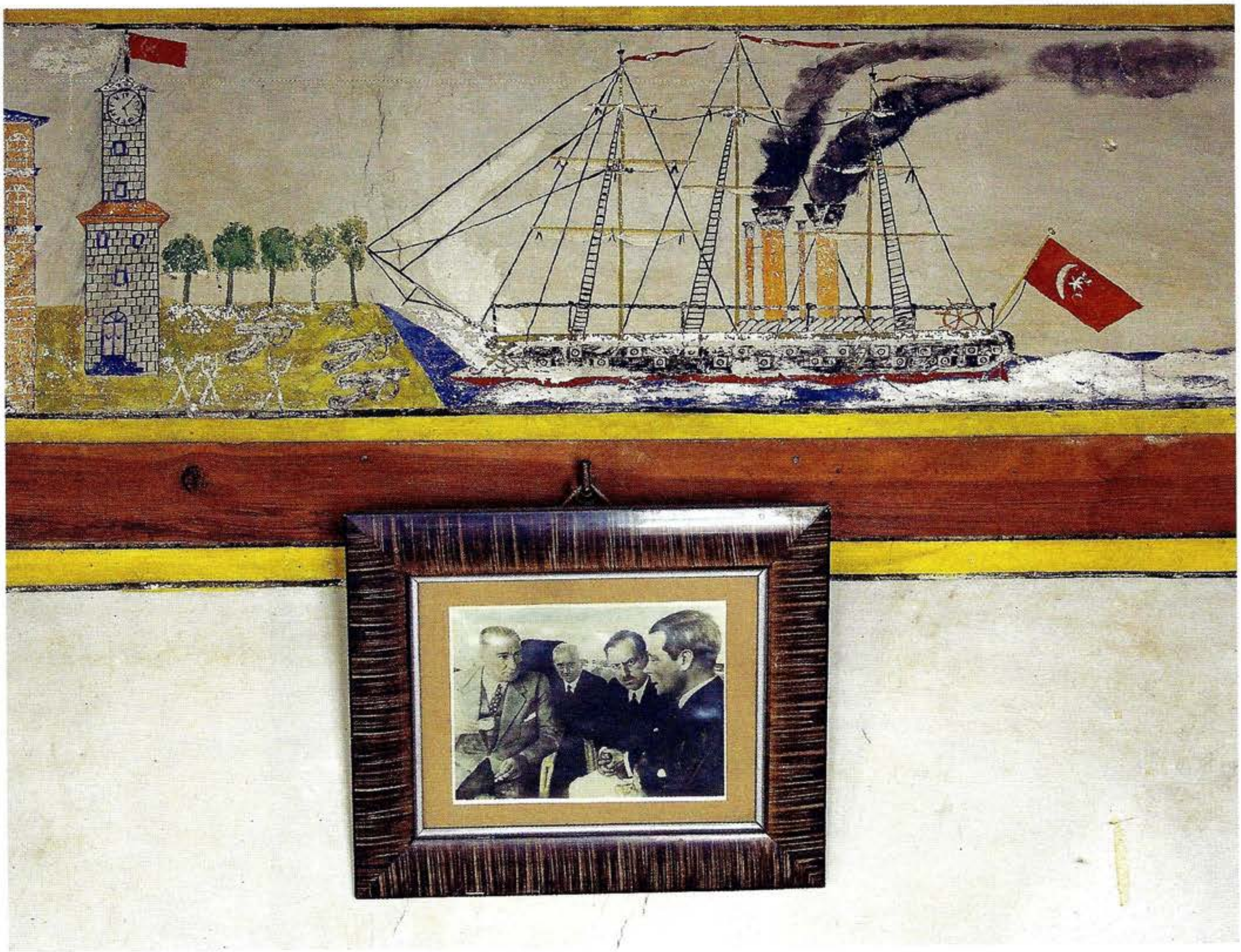
The panelled wall of the main living room, with its intricate design of compartments, shelves, niches and drawers, is the creation of a cabinetmaker from the nearby village of Bulak. Using hardly any nails, he made it from the wood of the amber-coloured pine, '*Pinus sylvestris*', brought down specially from the forests of neighboring Araç. The tree grows at high altitudes in northern Anatolia and reaches some 40 metres in height. The width of the floorboards in the house gives an idea of the girth of the trees



ABOVE In the most ornate of the beautifully ergonomic living rooms of the Sipahioğlu Konak, doors in the panelling reveal a miniature tin-lined bath. Bathers can sit inside and pour water over themselves with a bowl, or 'tas'. Bathing cabinets, or 'gusûlhane', are traditional features of all old Turkish houses, large or small

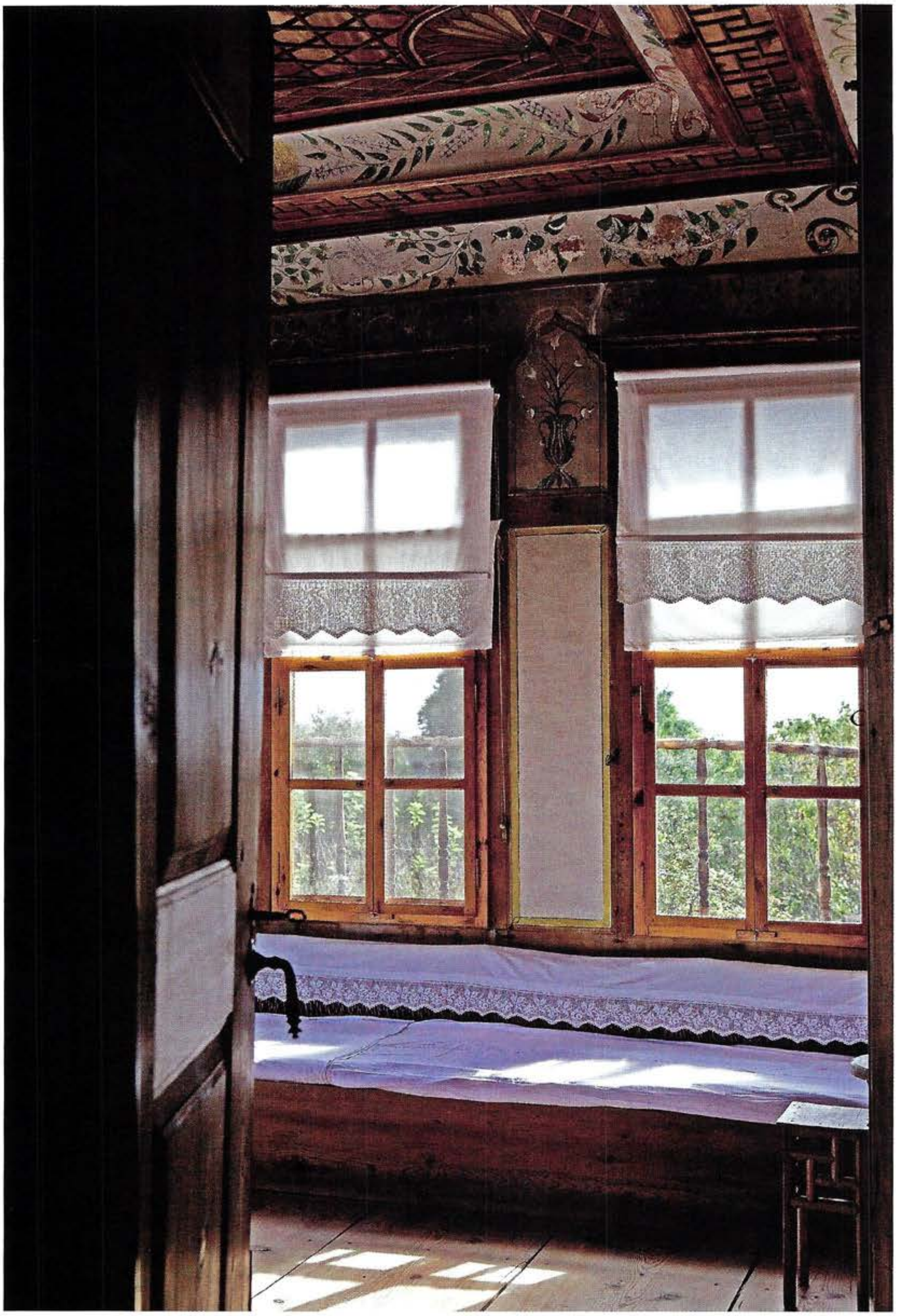
OPPOSITE The fireplace in the same room is flanked with niches and carved panels concealing yet more cupboards. Storage space can also be found under the cushions of the 'sedir', or built-in divans, which leaves the living space neat and tidy



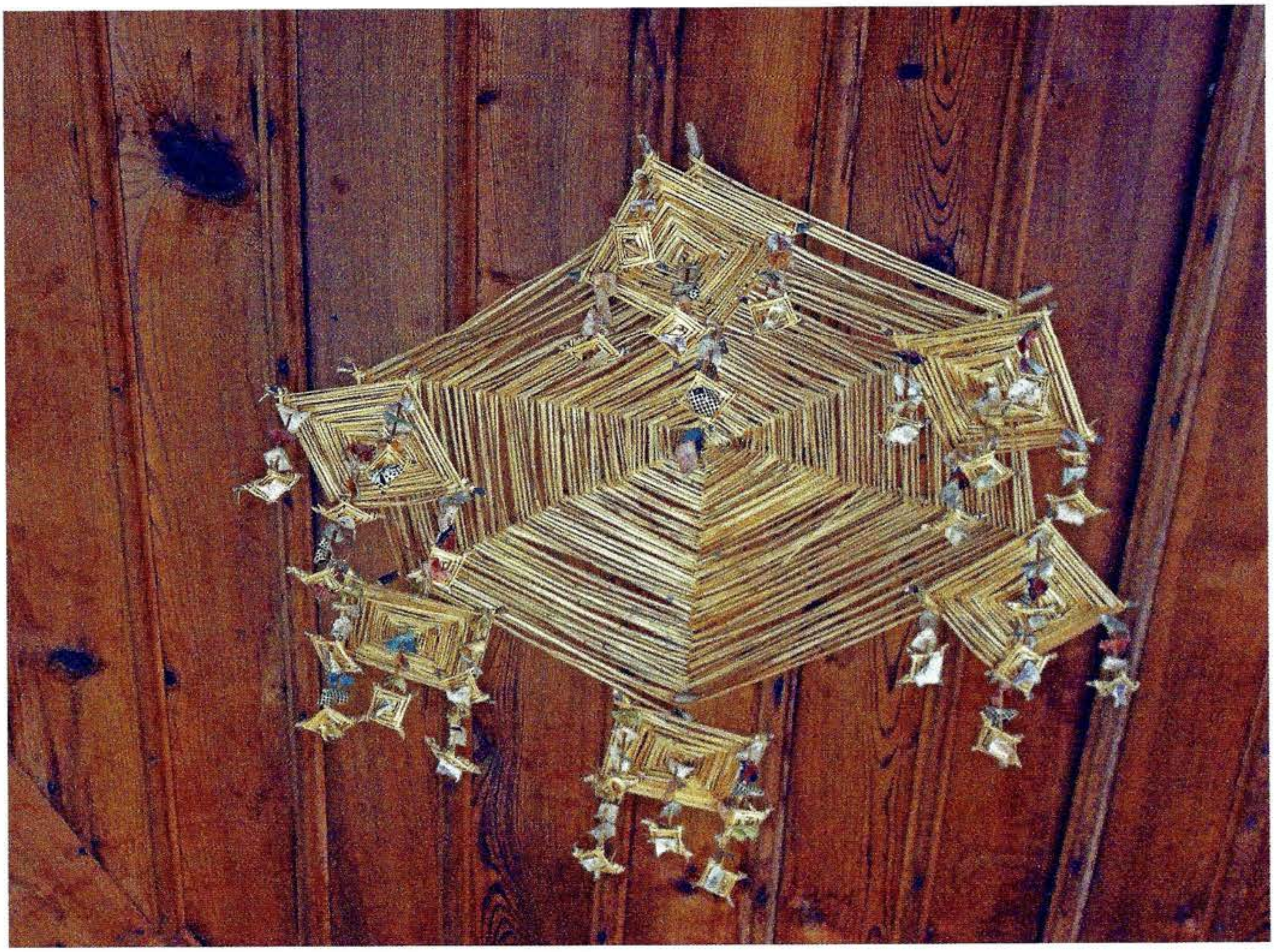


ABOVE A MURAL DEPICTING THE PRESIDENTIAL YACHT ERTUĞRUL, MOORED OFF THE QUAY OF THE DOLMABAHÇE PALACE IN FRONT OF THE CLOCK TOWER. BENEATH IS A PHOTOGRAPH OF EDWARD VIII WITH KEMAL ATATÜRK WHEN HE SAILED INTO ISTANBUL IN SEPTEMBER 1936 AS AN OFFICIAL GUEST. ATATÜRK FAMOUSLY TOOK HIM ON A CRUISE ABOARD THE ERTUĞRUL

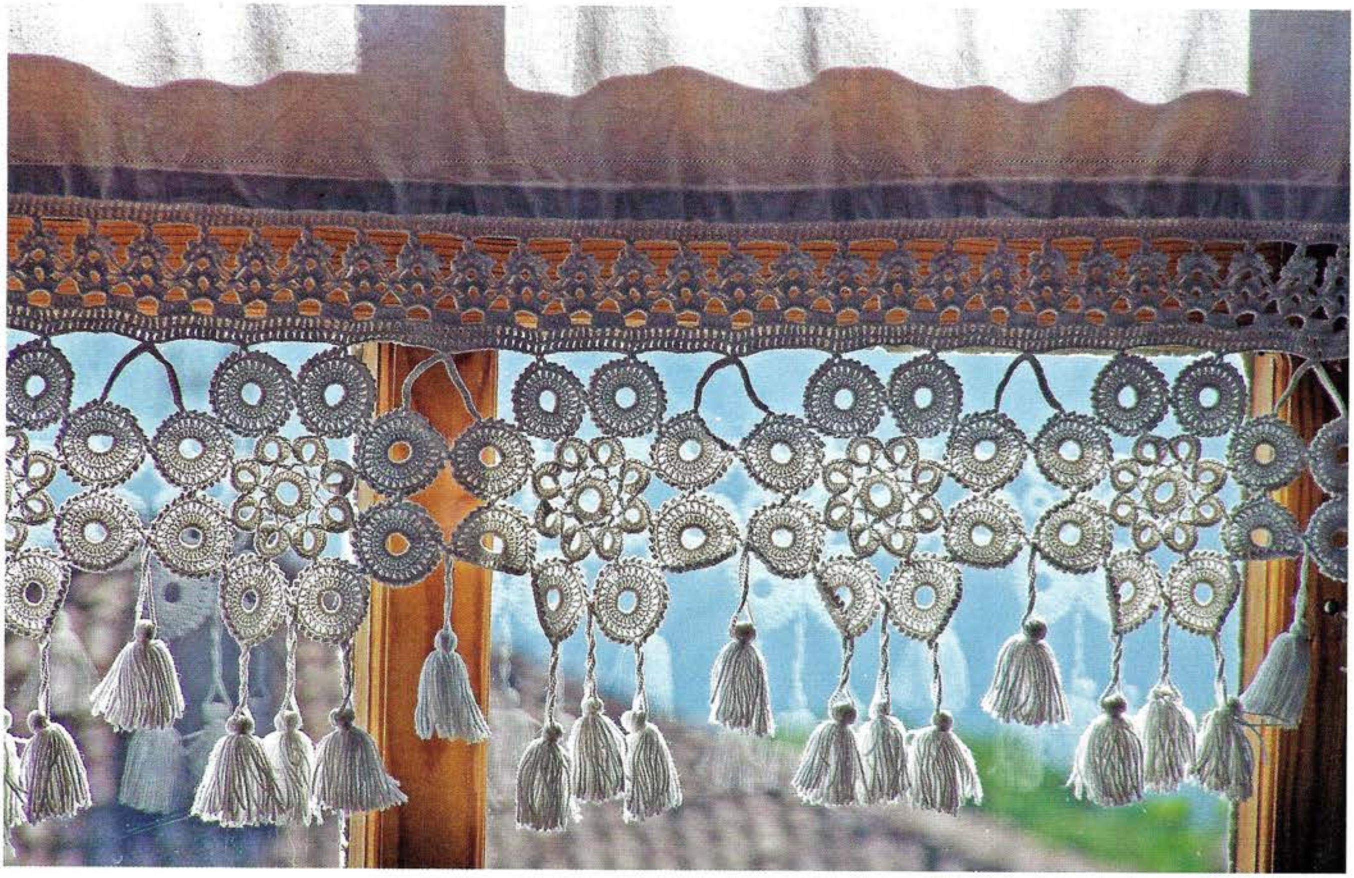
OPPOSITE FLANKED BY PAINTED RED CARNATIONS, THE FADED PHOTOGRAPH OF AN ANCESTOR, FALLEN IN WAR, IN AN ICONIC POSITION ABOVE THE FIREPLACE OF THE MAIN SITTING ROOM



ABOVE BOTH SITTING ROOMS HAVE THE SAME PRETTILY PAINTED CORNICES AND WOODEN CEILINGS
OPPOSITE THE 'SEDIR' WITH ITS PRINTED COTTONS CREATES A BREEZY CORNER IN THE SECOND SITTING ROOM. THE DELICATE WHITE CUSHION COVERS AND BLINDS ARE ALL HAND-MADE



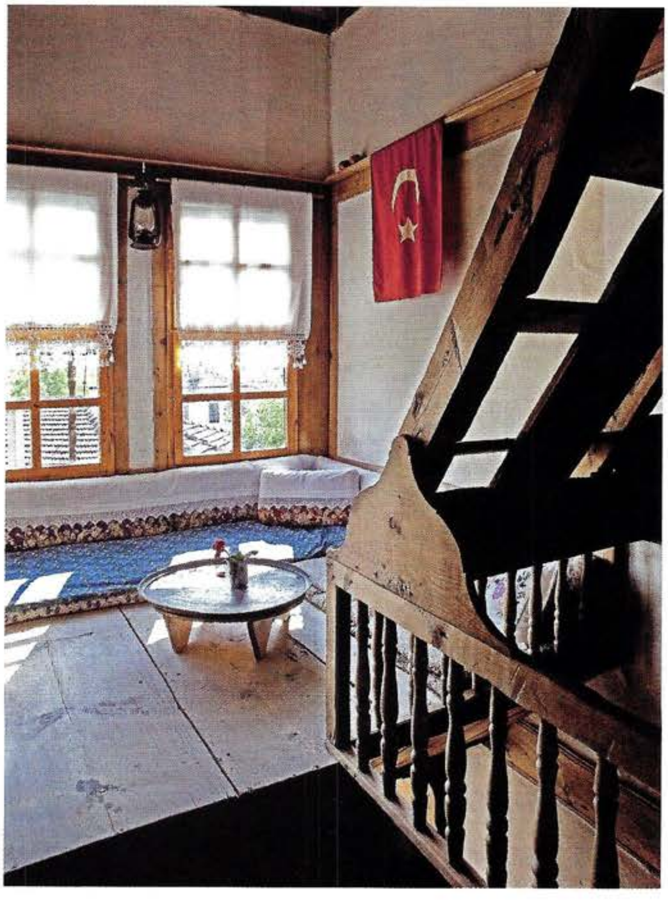
Opposite The main sitting room has an intricately patterned ceiling. The woodwork technique is known as 'hazerpare' (a thousand pieces) – the pieces are interlocked to create a radiating medallion. The mirrored globe symbolises a bird's-eye view of worldly affairs
Above This delicate mobile sculpture resembling a Chinese pagoda is a 'fly palace'. Woven from stems of wheat and thin strips of ribbon, it turns and trembles in the breeze from the windows, attracting flies like a magnet

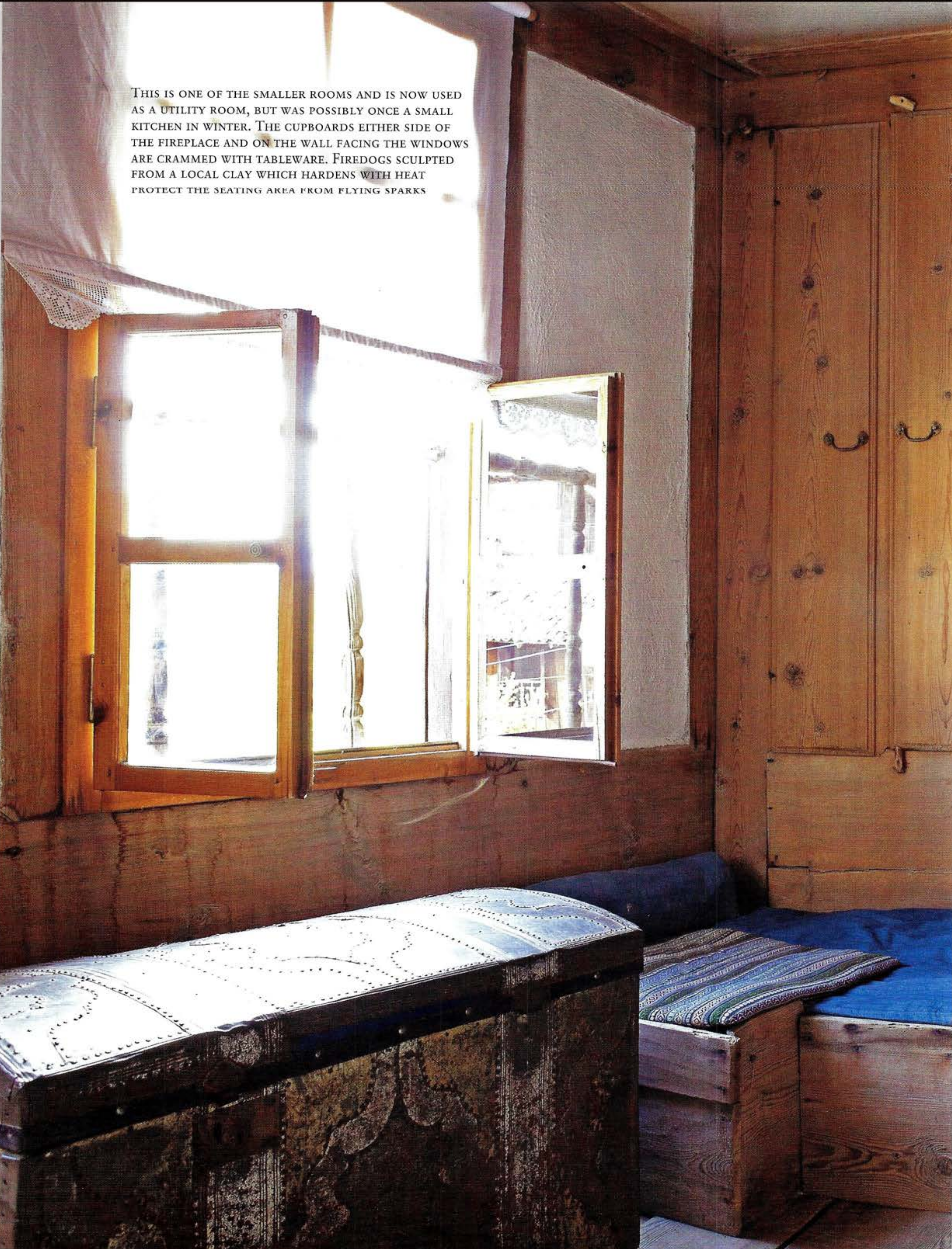


OPPOSITE THIS 'SEDIR', OR DIVAN, IN FRONT OF THE WINDOW IN ONE OF THE SMALL ROOMS PROVIDES THE PERFECT PLACE FOR A SIESTA. THE BOOKS AND THE DESK ARE TREASURED HEIRLOOMS, AS ARE THE OLD ROSES FROM THE GARDEN

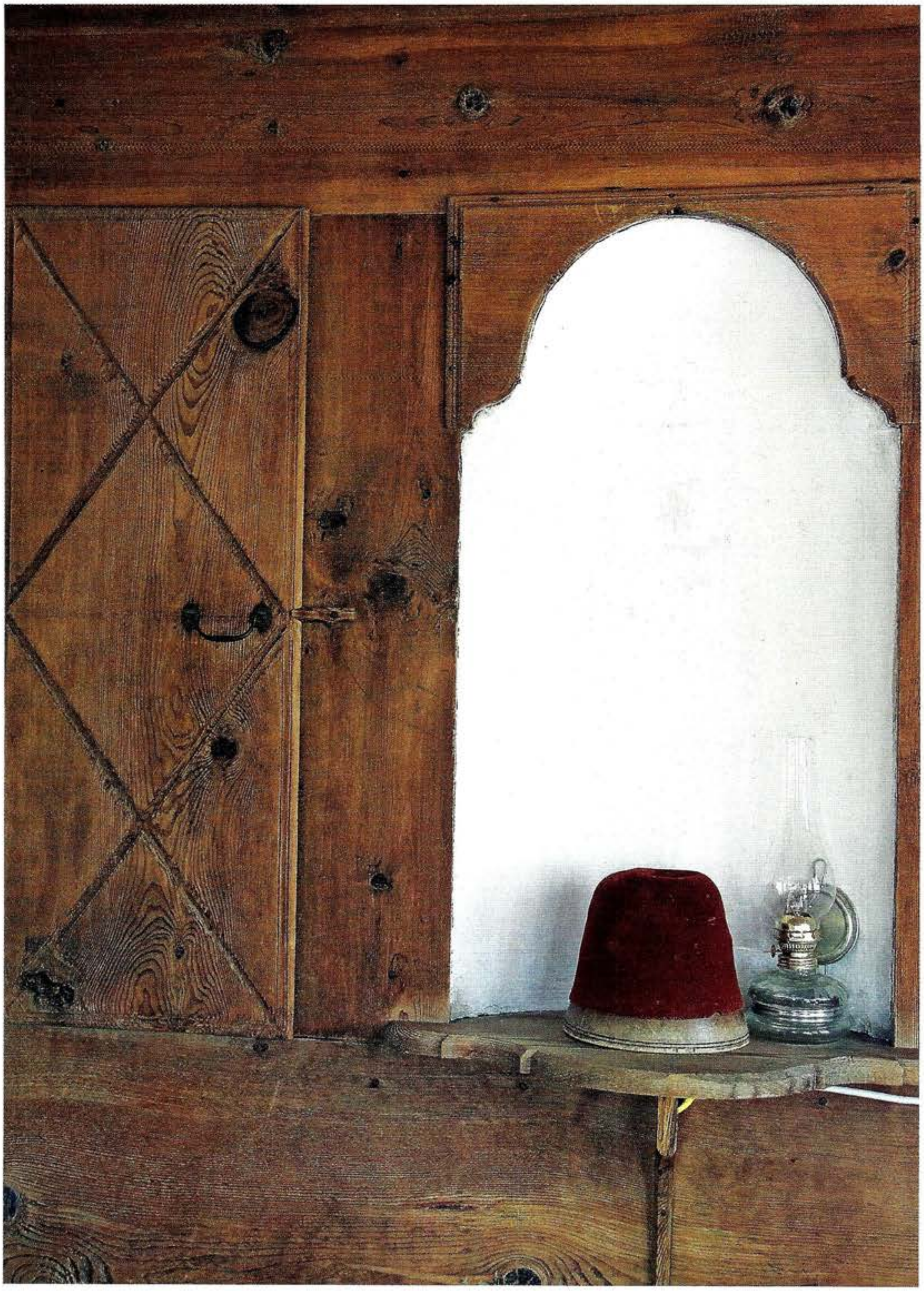
ABOVE THE COTTON BLINDS ON THE LANDING HAVE ELABORATE TASSELLED FRINGES MADE BY THE WOMEN OF THE HOUSE

RIGHT ANOTHER INVITING, SUNLIT CORNER, THIS TIME A PLATFORM ON THE LANDING AT THE END OF THE HALL. THE SHELF ABOVE THE WINDOWS, KNOWN AS AN 'ALMALIK', IS A PLACE TO STORE FRUIT, PARTICULARLY APPLES, WHICH FILL THE HOUSE WITH THEIR SCENT. THE STEPS LEAD UP TO A ROOFTOP KIOSK WITH VIEWS OVER THE GARDENS AND FIELDS AND HILLS BEYOND

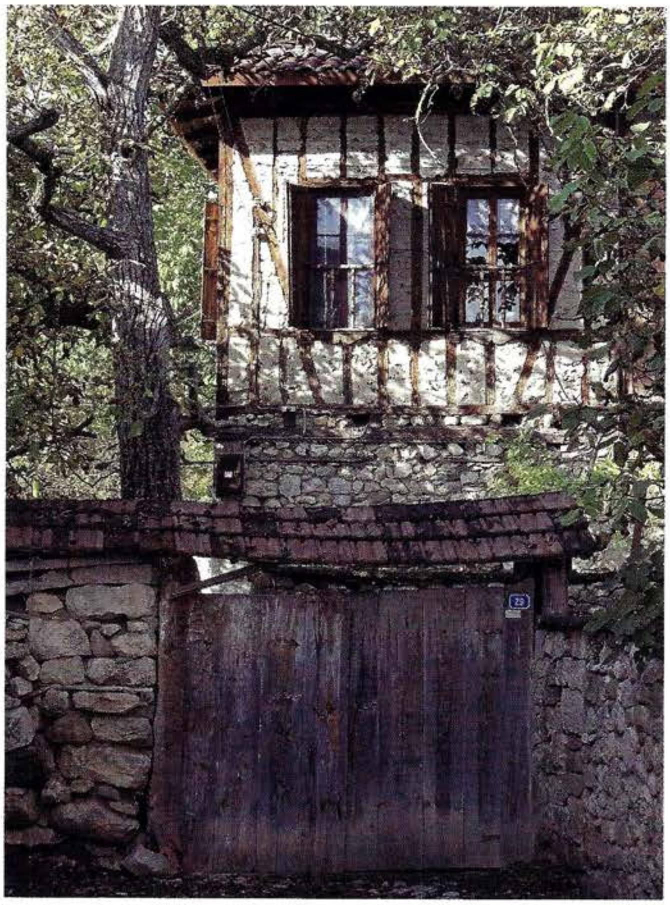


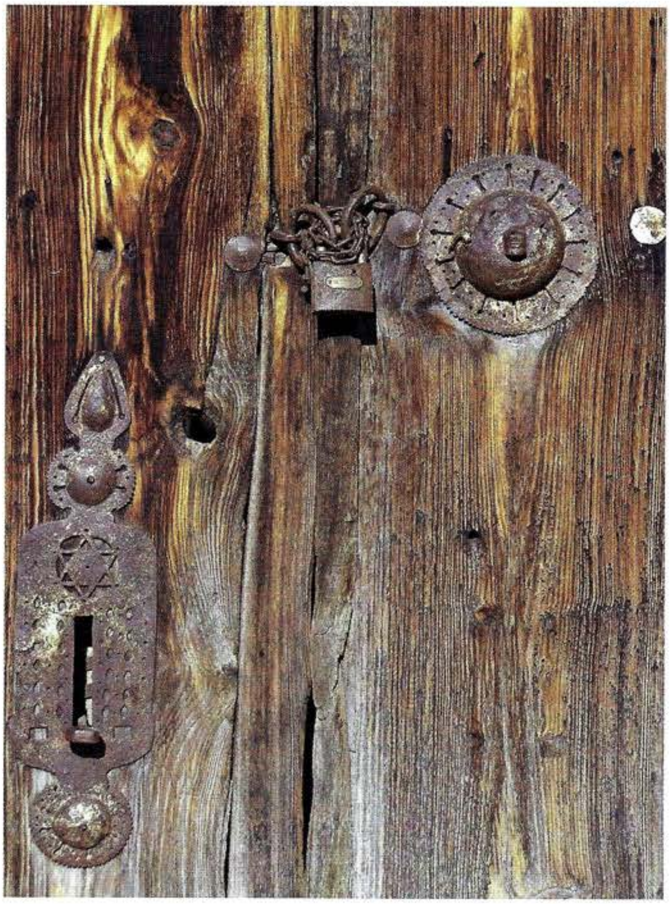


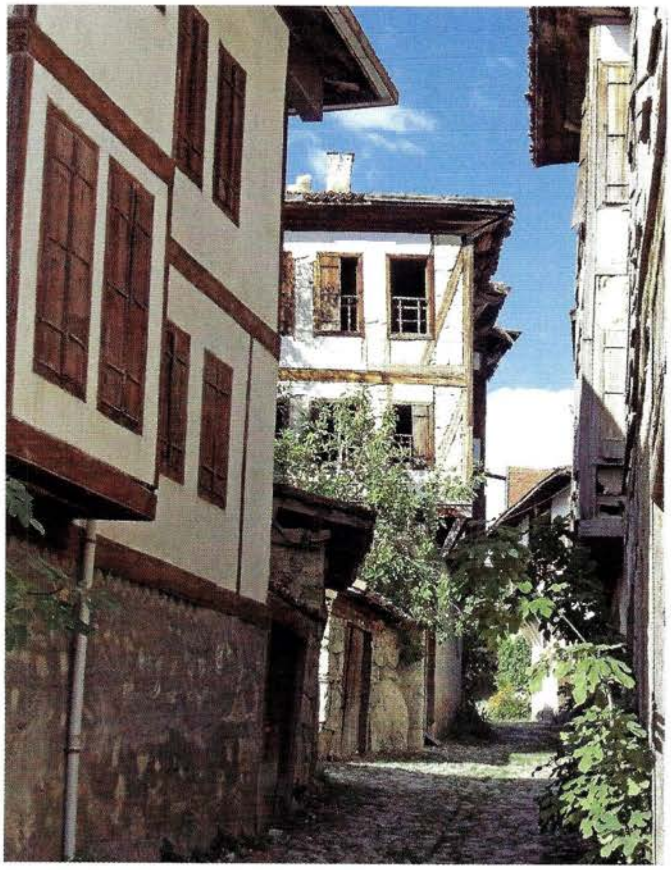
This is one of the smaller rooms and is now used as a utility room, but was possibly once a small kitchen in winter. The cupboards either side of the fireplace and on the wall facing the windows are crammed with tableware. Firedogs sculpted from a local clay which hardens with heat protect the seating area from flying sparks



Above A little arched niche displays an old oil lamp and a fez, complete with its own fez mould.
The cupboard doors have traditional wooden latches
Opposite This green-glazed jar, possibly from Tokat, once belonged in the kitchen but now serves as a flower vase

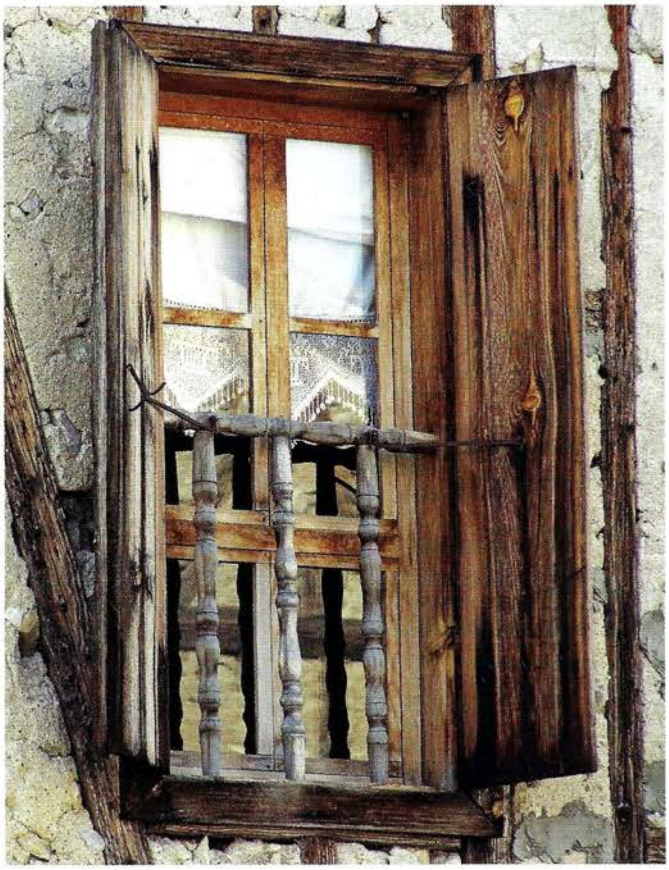


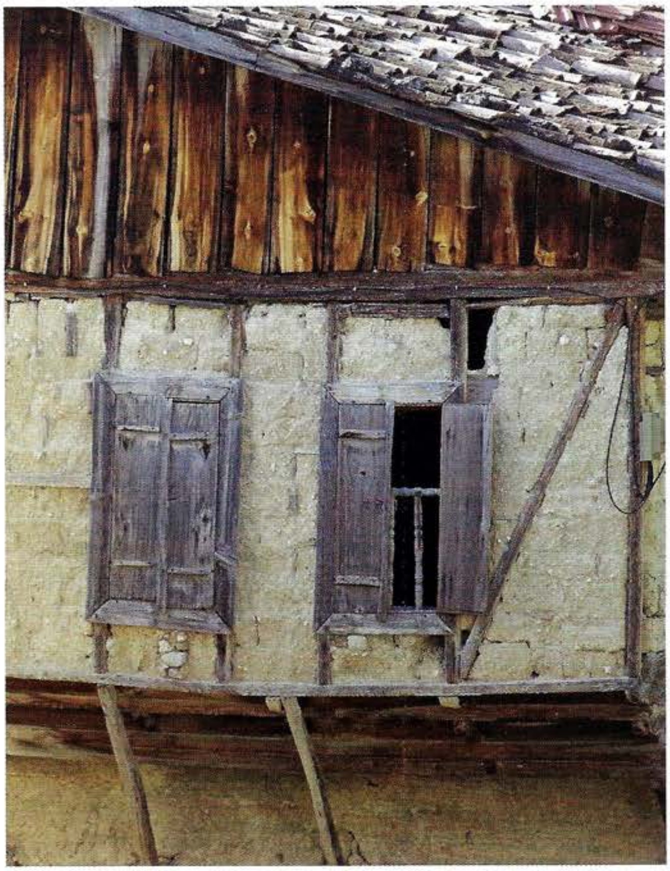




ABOVE THE SOMNOLENT FAÇADE OF NO 29 IN THE DAPPLED SHADE OF A WALNUT TREE. **ABOVE RIGHT** AN ORNATE IRON DOORKNOB AND LATCH HAVE, SADLY, BEEN REPLACED WITH A RUSTY PADLOCK
RIGHT A STREET IN YÖRÜK KÖYÜ WITH RECENTLY RESTORED HOUSES

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP AN INGENIOUS CARVED WOODEN HOOK TO HOLD OPEN THE DOOR OF A SITTING ROOM IN THE SİPAHİOĞLU KONAK
BELOW LEFT HAND-TURNED WOODEN BARS IN A WINDOW
BELOW RIGHT EARTH PIGMENTS IN THE EXPOSED PLASTER GIVE THE WALL A WARM STONE COLOUR



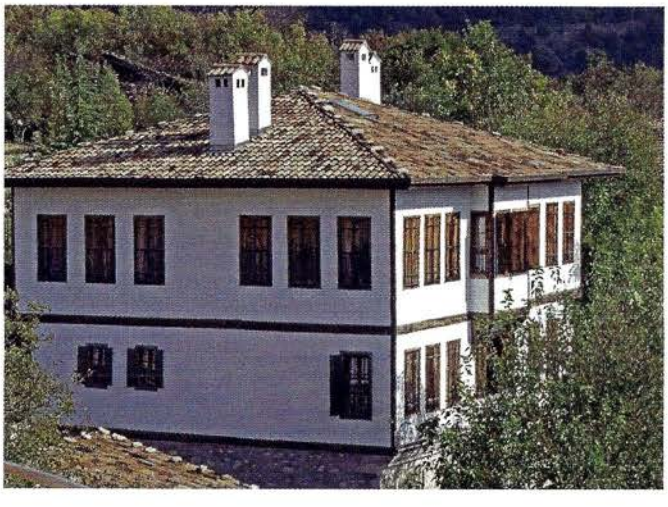


> 'It is family that makes Yörük Köyü so special. Unlike Safranbolu's illustrious konaks, these are not the mansions of wealthy merchants. Houses are unpretentious, a little ramshackle, introverted'

ABOVE YAŞAR SİPAHİ IN HIS GALATASARAY LYCÉE TIE. HE WAS BORN IN THE SİPAHİOĞLU KONAK IN 1907, AND HIS GREAT-NEPHEW, ALİ RİZA TUNCA, LIVES THERE TODAY
ABOVE A NEIGHBOURING KONAK SEEN FROM THE HOUSE'S ROOFTOP KIOSK
OPPOSITE A FADING MEMENTO OF A PICNIC OUTING IN EARLY SPRING. YAŞAR SIPAHI BEY, IN THE STRAW BOATER, IS WITH HIS GRANDMOTHER AND NEIGHBOURS

The Black Sea towns of Safranbolu and Kastamonu are on old caravan routes and were flourishing trade centres in Ottoman times. Like so many cities in modern Turkey, Safranbolu is in danger of being swamped by its industrial other half, Karabük. But out of sight of the main road, 10 kilometres east of Safranbolu, is a village called Yörük Köyü, which is magically preserved in a time warp.

The mother town, Safranbolu, was listed as a Unesco World Heritage site in 1994, and Yörük Köyü, with its cream-plastered classical Ottoman houses, is also part of a conservation zone, though it remains charmingly under-restored. The stone walls and wooden roofs and minarets of its two small mosques were last reconstructed in the 18th century. The 16th-century hamam is in ruins, but the old communal washing hall, or *çamaşırhane*, where village woman meet over laundry to share gossip and sing songs, was restored in 1996. It is a popular meeting place, a club for women, just as the village's only coffee house is still the men's club, untouched, a place for elders to reflect on the old days, on country matters and affairs of state, or to play backgammon. Every house has running water, but a few street fountains still channel spring water from the hills – such a luxury.



If time has stood still in Yörük Köyü, the number of inhabitants is dwindling. Today, of 140 listed houses, only 60 are lived in. When I first visited this enchanting place, wandering through its quiet streets, we met a polite gentleman who invited us into his house. It was the Sipahioğlu Konağı – "the konak of the sons of the Sipahi". Ali Riza Tunca is a proud descendant. Like other names in the village, such as Cebeci, Seymen and Odabaşı, Sipahi denotes an Ottoman rank and tells of a military past. The *sipahi* were cavalry, a rank set apart from the janissaries, selected exclusively from among the Turkmen *yörük*, who were related to the sultan and shared his Asiatic origins. They were loyal to the empire to the end.

Who were these *yörük* who give the village its name? They were wandering tribes from Central Asia, on the move since time immemorial – the word is from the old Turkish *yörümek*, meaning to walk. Every year they set off, north, south, east or west, in pursuit of fresh pastures, sometimes escaping a marauding army or inclement weather, or simply out of curiosity. When these Turkic people poured into the west over the Caucasus and across Anatolia, many settled along the way, merging into local populations. In the 12th and 13th centuries the *yörük* in the Seljuk Empire converted to Islam, but they remained nomadic at heart, following the seasons in their migrations, and joined ancient beliefs to the new faith. Resilience made them useful fighting stock, a fact appreciated even by Byzantine emperors. But as the Ottoman Empire emerged from among the principalities that sprang up after the Seljuk Empire waned, the wandering *yörük* were encouraged to settle. Governments, then as now, liked to count their tax-paying citizens.

In Ottoman registers, Yörük Köyü was called "Yörükân-ı Taraklı Borlu". It would seem that in the 15th century two *yörük* clans, the Taraklı and the Borlu, were granted grazing rights and settled in the area. In return they took part in Ottoman campaigns. Strong and courageous, the *yörük* men, and women too, proved fine warriors and rose high in the ranks. Horsemanship, skill at archery and loyalty turned the *sipahi* into a military aristocracy. Their descendants carry the surname with pride. When tribal memories faded, the names of Taraklı and Borlu were dropped, but the communal sense of *yörük* identity never disappeared.

The Sipahioğlus' mansion is not the grandest of the houses of Yörük Köyü, a town house rather than a mansion. It has three storeys, like most of the others, and its simple, well-proportioned features give it a modest but elegant aspect from outside. Stone walls on the ground floor support two timber-framed upper floors. The infill of mud brick is plastered and whitewashed but timber beams are left exposed. The entrance hall, or *eyvan*, as it is called here, is paved with slate. In larger houses there are courtyards, known as *hayat*. A timber staircase leads to a small landing where there is a larder – today it is the kitchen, which would originally have been out in the garden or courtyard.

Stairs continue up to the main living area, where a narrow, longish hall, or *sofa*, connects two spacious corner rooms, with two small rooms neatly sandwiched in between. The panelled walls and intricately patterned wooden ceilings reveal

the hand of a master carpenter. Doors in the panelling open to reveal cupboards, shelves and, in one corner room, even a bathing cabinet, or *gusûlhane*. These all-purpose living rooms can turn instantly into bedrooms – a practical solution for extended families and unexpected guests. A fireplace is the source of heat – and hot water, when necessary, for a quick wash in the bathing cabinet. For a proper bath, the family paid weekly visits to the village hamam.

All the rooms have the same panelled walls and platforms, or *sedirs*, for seating. In the corner rooms, they run along two walls, beneath the large windows. No modern furniture adds clutter, except for an iron bedstead in the hall and a bureau with shelves of books in a small room serving as a study. Bits of the walls not occupied by windows or panelled cupboards are whitewashed and painted with floral designs in faded hues by the timid hand, one suspects, of a talented relative or friend rather than a professional. A family tree and old photographs emphasise the strong family ties of the Sipahioğlu clan. This seems to be true of all Yörük Köyü families. For weddings and ceremonial days men bring out traditional *seymen* outfits, like those worn by the *efe*, the dandyish warriors of the Aegean, recalling ancient patriotic duties; and women wear richly embroidered velvet *bindallı* dresses. They dance, feast, sing, recite poetry and play energetic games.

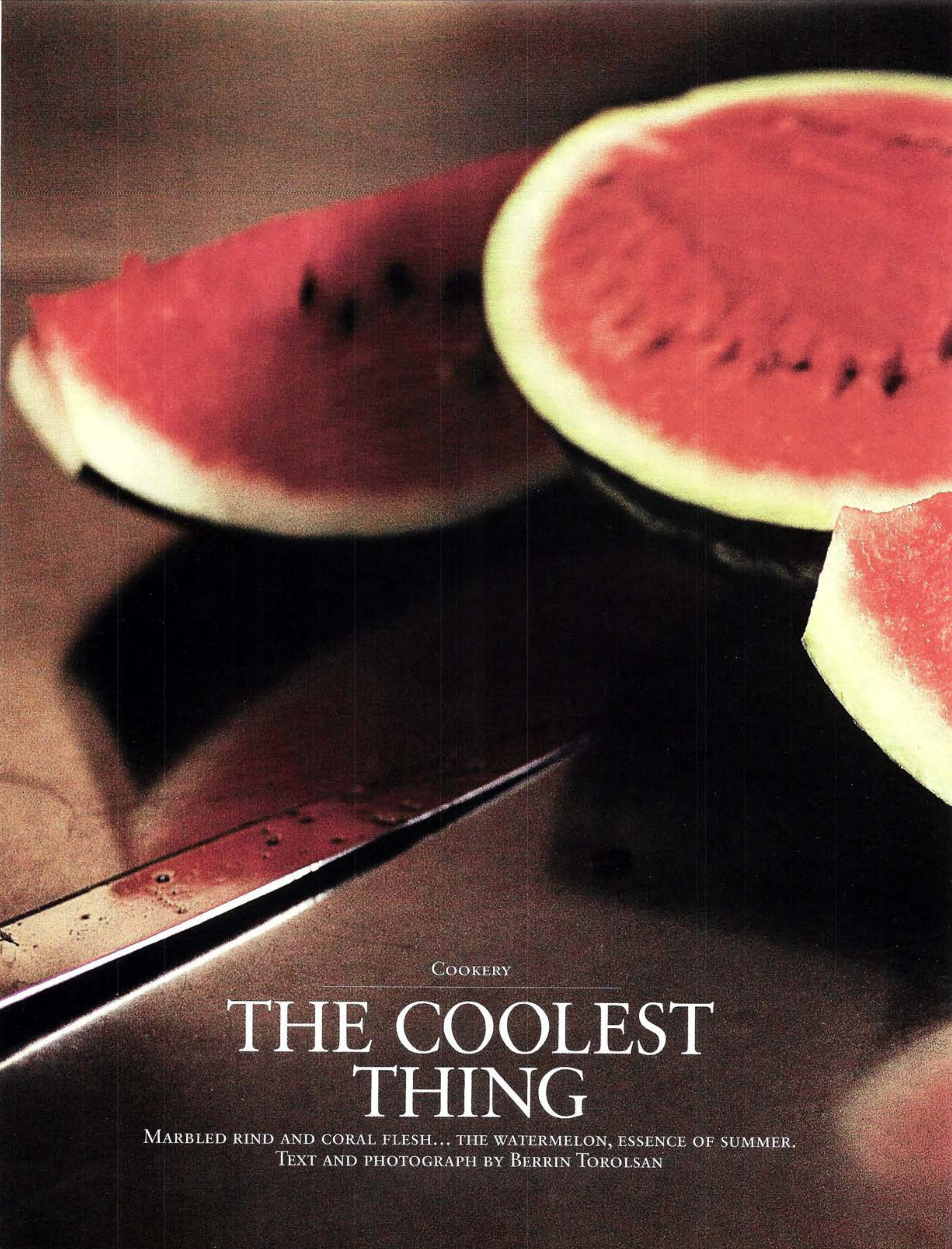
It is family that makes Yörük Köyü so special. Unlike Safranbolu's illustrious konaks, these are not the mansions of wealthy merchants. Houses are unpretentious, a little ramshackle, introverted. Yet they are ergonomical in design, spacious and aesthetically proportioned, with clean features. They are designed to let in plenty of light and air, their many windows opening onto fine views. Architectural features, both inside and out, are functional. Yet the details show real panache, from the array of doorbells for different visitors to the ceiling "fly palaces" designed to trap bothersome flies, and the white embroidered blinds. They reflect the life of comfort and ease of real gentry.

Yörük Köyü was at one time renowned for its chivalrous warriors. Under the Republic it championed education and was the birthplace of diplomats, lawyers, entrepreneurs, doctors and artists. Best known is La Scala's "Turkish Diva", the soprano Laylâ Gencer, whose father was a businessman from Yörük Köyü. Pioneering the rescue of the village is the professor of architectural history, Metin Sözen, for many years responsible for Istanbul's later Ottoman palaces, including Dolmabahçe. Yörük Köyü owes its survival to the sensitivity and wisdom of its guardians. ◆

The author would like to thank Ali Riza Tunca, Hakan Akçaoğlu and the Çekül Vakfı for their assistance in the preparation of this article

Travel Notes

- Yörük Köyü is a long but easy drive from Istanbul (415km), motorway all the way. Ankara is 230km. Exit at Gerede and follow signs for Karabük and Kastamonu.
- There are lots of places to stay in Safranbolu: Gülevi, a family-owned luxury hotel, occupies three 18th-century mansions (+90 370 725 4645 /530 243 0045; gulevisafranbolu.com.tr). Yörük Köyü's own restored house hotel is the Muratoğlu Konak (open May–Ocober: +90 530 419 6719; yorukmuratoglu.com).
- Turkey's western Black Sea coast is full of stunning, if sadly dilapidated, historic houses. A visit to Kastamonu is also recommended: see Cornucopia 45.
- *At Home in Turkey* by Berrin Torolsan, with photographs by Solvi dos Santos (Thames & Hudson £24.95, available from cornucopia.net) features 27 beautiful houses including the Gökçüoğlu Konak in Safranbolu.

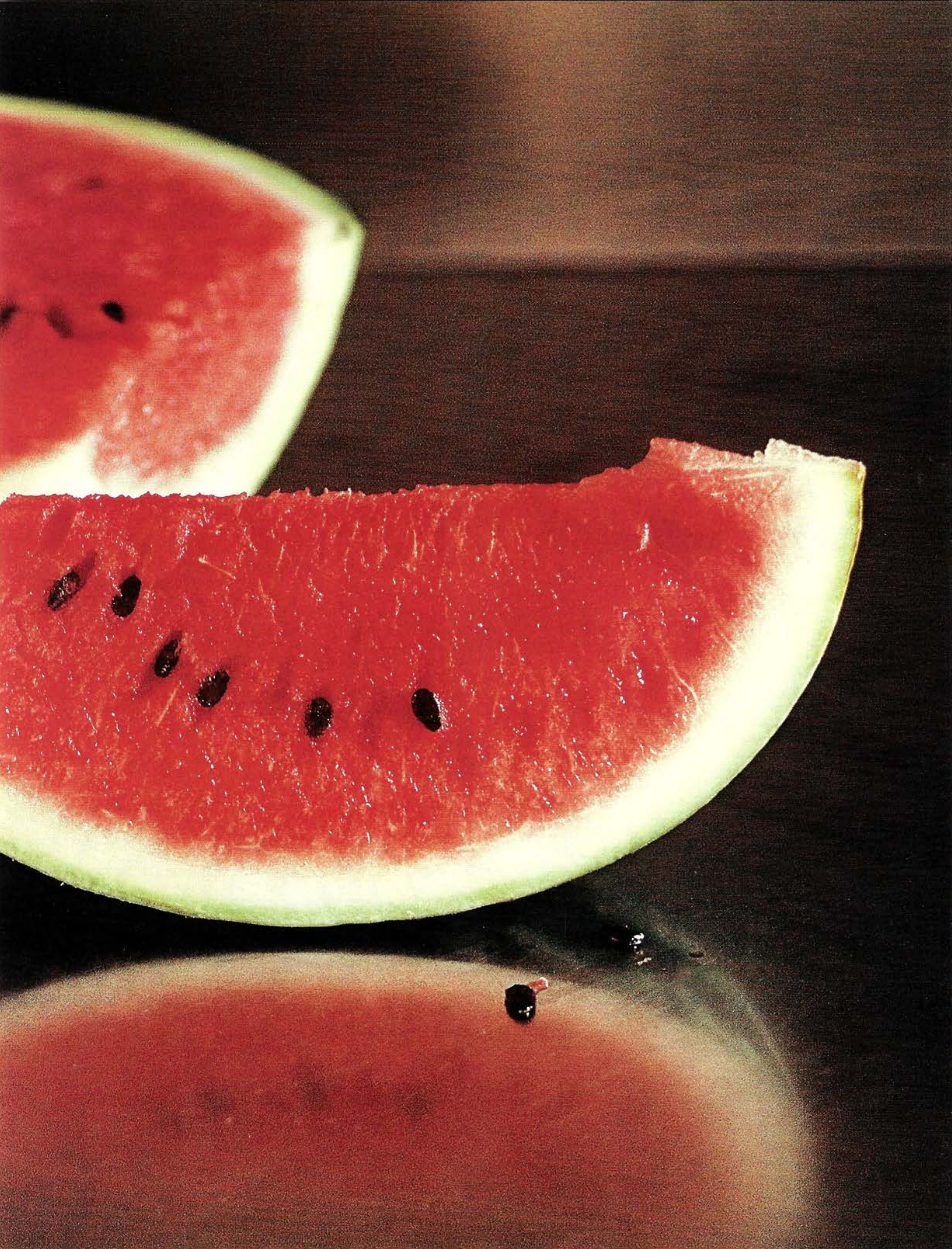


Cookery

THE COOLEST THING

Marbled rind and coral flesh… the watermelon, essence of summer.

Text and photograph by Berrin Torolsan



In August 1576 a written order for watermelons went out to the suppliers of the palace kitchens. They were to be purchased from Lapseki, a town on the Anatolian shore of the Dardanelles, to suit the taste of the magnificent Sultan Süleyman. One hot summer's day two decades earlier, Ogier de Busbecq, ambassador of the Holy Roman Emperor to Süleyman the Magnificent, had received a huge watermelon as a gift from the grand vizier, Rüstem Pasha. In a letter Busbecq describes the fruit as "a very large melon of the kind Germans call *Wasserplutzer*", adding, "The watermelons which grow at Constantinople are extraordinarily pleasant to the taste and have red seeds inside them." The Austrian traveller Hans Dernschwam, who was in Istanbul at the same time, also reports that big green melons, "which they call *karpusch*", are eaten a lot – to his surprise without ill effect. He notes that "melons called *kaun* in Turkish" are also popular and inexpensive.

Watermelons and melons – *karpuz* and *kavun* in modern Turkish – are still cultivated in abundance, and a summer without them would be unthinkable. The watermelons are fresh and crisp, the melons balmy and syrupy, and the thirst-quenching qualities of both are unrivalled. As their sugar content is high, they are only consumed as a dessert. In the old days caiques piled high with their sweet cargo would sail up to the yalıs lining the Bosphorus; today huge pyramids of marbled emerald watermelons and mountains of fragrant golden melons are a familiar sight on country roads and in street markets.

Although both are referred to as "melons" and they resemble each other – in fact are often inseparable companions – melons and watermelons are different species. The melon (*Cucumis melo*) is related to cucumbers, while the watermelon (*Citrullus lanatus*) belongs to the large family of marrows and gourds, which includes even the loofah plant. According to the Sinologist and anthropologist Berthold Laufer, the neo-Sanskrit *tarambuja*, the Hindustani *harbuzâ* (or *tarbuzâ*), the Tibetan *tarbuz*, the Russian and Polish *arbuz* (and, no doubt, the Turkish *karpuz*) are all variations of the same name. The Chinese *si-kua*, meaning "fruit from the west", points to an ancient import.

Wild forms are found in Africa, and fossilised seeds have been unearthed in Tutankhamun's tomb, but the cultivation of domesticated sweet forms of watermelon most probably began in the fertile Tarim Basin in Central Asia. A Chinese monk, Qh'ang Ch'un, invited in 1219 by Ghengis Khan to visit his court, was offered watermelons in Central Asia during his long journey west. A disciple of Qh'ang Ch'un, who later wrote an account of the journey, was amazed by the enormous size of the watermelons in Samarkand. Cultivated forms, as well as methods of cultivation, were possibly introduced to Anatolia by nomadic Türkmen tribes. Via the Ottomans, the fruit – as well as the word *karpuz* – arrived in the Balkans and entered its languages.

The Hungarian historian Sándor Takáts (1860–1932) tells us much about how this happened in his book on 16th-century Turkish–Hungarian relations, *Rajzok a Török Világból* (*Sketches of the Turkish World in Hungary*), based on diplomatic letters found in the Hungarian archives. The correspondence of the Ottoman governors known as the Pashas of Budin reveals the strong Turkish influences on Hungarian culture – from fashion and crafts to agriculture and diet. "The Turks introduced to our country so many useful plants, flowers, fruit trees and animals," Takáts writes.

The Pashas of Budin would send their Hungarian friends and neighbours rare garden plants (some of them from the imperial gardens and nurseries), Persian apricots and plums, Turkish ducks and sheep, as well as melon and watermelon seeds. Takáts adds that Hungarian prisoners of war, released after a ransom was paid to the Ottomans, returned home with watermelon seeds from Edirne, and with tulip and narcissus bulbs too. The cultivation of new species seems to have been all the rage from the 16th century. Even the Empress Maria Theresa of Austria, who was also Queen of Hungary, would later send the crowned heads of Europe cuttings brought back from Turkey. Takáts comes to the conclusion that it was because Hungary was an Ottoman domain that it became the cultural bridge between Orient and Occident.

He mentions, in passing, that in Ottoman Hungary the most popular celebrations were watermelon harvest festivals. Turkish and Hungarian gardeners and farmers would come from far and wide to join in these annual gatherings and share delicious watermelon wine. Whether watermelon wine is still popular in Hungary I do not know, but the watermelon remains a source of pride to Hungarian farmers, and a favourite fruit in summer, just as it is in Turkey.

Thriving on sandy, alluvial riverbanks, thousands of tons of watermelons are cultivated annually in Turkey. Every region has its speciality – the 17th-century traveller Evliya Çelebi lists 16 places famous for their watermelons, including Istanbul and Lapseki, suppliers to the sultan's table. Today, there are all sorts of varieties, such as the yellow-fleshed fruits from Bursa or the deep-green stripy watermelons from Tekirdağ, growing on the banks of Meriç river in Thrace, that are often so crisp that you need only touch them with a knife to crack them open and reveal their scarlet, sorbet-like contents. Round watermelons with a deep-green rind concealing a succulent coral-red flesh ripen in the fertile valleys of the Gediz river on the Aegean. Judging by their name, *yeni dünya* (new world), they must have come from America. This is an early variety whose appearance on greengrocers' stalls indicates that summer is on the doorstep. The *gülle*, or canonball, watermelon – another spherical fruit, as the name suggests – is sweet and juicy, with black pips. The large *alaca*, with its smooth, marbled rind, is cultivated around Adana and Tarsus in the warmer Mediterranean climate and sent to the cities or exported to the Middle East.

Last but not least are the legendary huge, elongated green fruits with dark tiger stripes from Diyarbakır, in the southeast. These watermelon fields are on the banks of the Tigris. In April, after the floods recede, farmers dig deep trenches in the sand of the riverbank and sow the seeds in these moist beds, which they enrich with special

> *'Never swim before the first watermelon rind falls into the water, goes an old Istanbul saying. By the time they ripen, the sea will have reached just the right temperature for swimming'*

manure, then watch the largest, tastiest, medal-winning champions grow.

In the past, it was common to see 40-kilogram watermelons, each fruit a donkey's load. But, along with the diminishing size of families, Diyarbakır's giant watermelons have shrunk. People today – especially in Istanbul – prefer a medium-sized fruit that fits in the fridge. Most Diyarbakır watermelons, with their sweet red or pink flesh and black seeds, now weigh a modest 10–15 kilos. They are the last to arrive in the markets, in August, but are a feast to the palate as well as the eye.

The secret behind these celebrity Diyarbakır watermelons is partly the riverbank "well method" of cultivation, but also the special manure. Thankfully a handful of farmers still use the traditional methods of their ancestors, though I fear, like many other things, they are doomed to become history fairly soon. In picturesque adobe dovecotes, handed down from generation to generation, they keep wild pigeons, treasured not for their flesh but for their droppings. This manure, combined with plenty of southeast Anatolian sunshine, seems to increase the sugar content of the fruit. Farmers swear that no other fertiliser – not even chicken droppings – will do. Only pigeons have this miraculous effect.

The English clergyman William Biddulph wrote an account of his eight years in the Levant, *The travels of certaine Englishmen*, in which he describes how he was on his way to Aleppo in 1609 when he came to a village with "many pigion houses", where he was offered melons. Had he looked a little more closely he would most probably have observed watermelon fields next to the dovecotes.

Watermelon vendors advertise their goods as "cubed sugar", which is true most of the time. The fruits are sweet and crisp and, containing 92 percent water (enriched with vitamins C, B and A), are superb thirst-quenchers. The red flesh is also a source of the antioxidant lycopene and highly recommended by nutritionists. Physicians of the past, aware of the fruit's powerful diuretic qualities, prescribed watermelon to patients with kidney disorders.

But how to choose a really sweet, tasty fruit? Either you trust your local greengrocer and ask him to choose one for you, or you trust your luck. Under-ripe fruit is tasteless; over-ripe fruit starts to become hollow and the texture suffers. So it must be picked at the optimum stage of ripeness. Real experts can tell just by looking, others by tapping the rind of the whole fruit – a mature melon should sound solid. This is an acquired skill, but vendors will suggest cutting a little piece for you to taste, which is the safest way if it is for immediate consumption.

Watermelons are sold by the kilo in Istanbul, but individually in the countryside – especially at harvest time – and, as early travellers observed, they have always been cheap and plentiful. "*Koovan* and *karpus* grow in Turkey in profusion and are equally cheap," as Charles White wrote in 1846 in his book *Three Years in Constantinople*.

In the countryside, after the last crop has been harvested and sent to market, it is time for villagers to begin preparations for winter. Watermelon juice is boiled down in huge cauldrons to a molasses known as *pekmez*. In some regions, especially Adana and Antalya, the white part of the rind is cooked into a preserve and any small, underdeveloped fruit (*kelek*) are pickled as a relish to go with winter dishes.

Ignore the early varieties and imports from warmer lands – the real watermelon season reaches its peak in Istanbul in July, when the harvest invades market stalls, and grocers' shops and vendors' carts are overflowing.

The season is always memorable. "Never swim before the first watermelon rind falls into the water," goes an old Istanbul saying. By the time they ripen and become plentiful, the sea will have reached just the right temperature for swimming. As a child I would scan the water for days from our house on the Bosphorus, eager to spot the first watermelon rind and run to my mother with the news.

Nowadays things have changed, distances have shortened and the romance has evaporated, since even in winter you see watermelons in supermarkets. But in Turkey, whether you live in the city or the countryside, the watermelon is still very much the symbol of summer. And everyone, young and old, pauper and sultan, loves to have their fill of this most wonderful fruit.

KARPUZ REÇELİ
WATERMELON-RIND JAM (1)

Watermelon rind (about 500g)
1/2 kg granulated sugar
2 glasses of water
Juice and peel of 1 lemon

Although always discarded, the rind of the watermelon is in fact rich in nutrients. For this recipe, fruit with a thicker rind is ideal – it will transform into glistening bites. The lack of aroma can be compensated for by adding a few drops of vanilla extract or a couple of cloves. This is a recipe from another country with lots of watermelons, Azerbaijan. It is a simplified version of a recipe called *garpiz murabbasi* in Ahmet Ahmedof's book *Azerbaycan Mutfağı*.

1 Remove the hard green outer rind of the watermelon as thinly as possible, leaving the white layer between the red flesh and green rind untouched. The recipe uses only this white part. Cut into bite-size cubes or diamonds.
2 Blanch briefly in boiling water until tender but firm to the touch.
3 Pour the contents of the pan into a colander and leave to drain.
4 Prepare a syrup by bringing the sugar and around two glasses of water to the boil. Slice the lemon peel and add it to the syrup – a few drops of vanilla extract or cloves can be added at this stage – and simmer gently on a low heat for about an hour, until the watermelon rind is translucent.
5 Add the lemon juice, bring to the boil again and remove from the heat. While still hot, spoon into clean jam jars, cover and store in a dark, cool place until needed.

Karpuz Reçeli
Watermelon-Rind Jam (II)

Slaked lime
Watermelon rind (about 500g)
1/2 kg granulated sugar
1 glass water

In the year 1539, when two of Süleyman the Magnificent's sons, the princes Beyazıt and Cihangir, were circumcised, the celebrations and ceremonies lasted two weeks. Tables at the feast overflowed with a never-ending array of dishes, sweetmeats and helva. A preserve of watermelon rind is listed along with 10 other jams offered to the guests after dinner. The recipe here is from the Balkans, where a few old Ottoman customs have escaped modernisation. Slaked lime (calcium hydroxide), sometimes referred to as "pickling lime", is used to obtain a firm texture, and the end result is pleasantly crisp. Pumpkin jam is prepared in the same manner.

1 Dissolve about 2 tablespoons of slaked lime powder in plenty of water in a deep glass or china bowl. Leave to rest and settle for a couple of hours.

2 Peel and discard the hard green outer rind and scrape off all the remnants of red flesh from the white layer with a spoon. Cut the white rind into chunks not larger then a small walnut, taking care to keep all the pieces more or less of equal size.

3 Without disturbing the lime sediment and blurring the water, gently ladle into a clean bowl. Transfer the chunks of rind into the bowl and leave to soak and firm up for 24 hours.

4 Drain and rinse the rind several times.

5 Prepare a syrup by bringing the sugar and water to the boil, add the watermelon pieces and simmer until the syrup has thickened and the rind has turned translucent.

6 Add the lemon juice, bring back to the boil and remove from the heat.

Watermelon with White Cheese (Beyaz Peynir)

For a light summer treat, chilled watermelon with a good *beyaz peynir*, or feta cheese, is a delightful combination of sweet and savoury. It hardly counts as a meal, but it refreshes both mind and body.

Kelek Turşusu
Pickled Baby Watermelons

Small unripe watermelons
Quince, cherry or vine leaves
Salt

In villages where watermelons grow, undeveloped fruits the size of oranges are used to make a delicious pickle. Sometimes other vegetables and small melons go into the pickle, too – in Mehmet Kâmil's 1844 recipe for Pickled Mixed Vegetables, cucumbers, courgettes, small melons and tiny watermelons are blanched and pickled in grape vinegar. The very simple recipe here is taken from a Turkish cookery book published in Bulgaria, where watermelons grow in abundance. It is made with brine – the ratio for preparing the brine is two tablespoons of salt (60g) per litre of water.

1 Rinse the fruit under plenty of water, and prick each one all over with a wooden toothpick.

2 Arrange the leaves in the bottom of a glass jar and place the fruit on top, then repeat the process, adding leaves and fruit in alternate layers. Top with the remaining leaves.

3 Place a weight on top.

4 Dissolve the salt in water by stirring. Pour the brine over the watermelons to cover. Stand the jar on a sunny windowsill to ferment. The pickle is ready to eat when it has turned yellow and smells appetising, in about a week.

5 Transfer the contents of the jar to the fridge until needed.

6 Cut into slices before serving in individual bowls, along with the juice, like compôte. This goes well with cold meats as well as roasts.

Karpuz Kabuğu Şekerlemesi
Candied Watermelon Rind

Watermelon rind (about 500g)
1/2 kg granulated sugar
1/2 glass water
1 dessertspoon butter

This recipe comes from Sevim İşgüder, owner of the famous Istanbul marzipan shop Bebek Badem Ezmecisi, in Bebek. She remembers how in her mother's day they used to prepare this exceptional sweet in great quantities. Her mother opened the marzipan shop in 1904 and handed it down to her two daughters in 1955. Since then Sevim Hanım, who runs the shop, has continued to make the marzipan, but no longer the candied rind. "There is no demand, because of commercial candies," she says. The glacé rind can be eaten alone as a sweet or used as a garnish on cakes.

1 Discard the green outer rind, then slice the white part into strips or bite-size cubes.

2 Blanch briefly in boiling water (they should still be firm to the touch) and drain.

3 Heat the sugar and water in a shallow pan, stirring until all the sugar has dissolved. Bring the syrup just to the boil.

4 Transfer the blanched rind to the syrup and simmer on a low heat, without burning the sugar, until the syrup reduces and the rind becomes glass-like.

5 Carefully lift out the fruit with a slotted spoon and transfer to a marble tabletop or to a surface lined with greaseproof paper.

6 Melt the butter in a spoonful of hot water, and brush each morsel with the buttery liquid for an irresistible glaze.

7 When they have completely dried and hardened, these sweet gems should be stored in an airtight container.

Karpuz Pekmezi
Watermelon Molasses

In Turkey the fruit left behind in fields after the harvest is not wasted. The sugar-rich juice is boiled down to the consistency of honey in huge cauldrons in the middle of the village. Molasses, known in Turkish as *pekmez*, is made with any fruit that grows plentifully in the region, such as grapes, mulberries, or even the pods of the carob tree.

Karpuz Şarabi
Watermelon Wine

I leave the question of how to make watermelon wine to the interested home vintner, who can surf the internet and choose one of any number of practical recipes, from wikiHow, for example. ◆

Berrin Torolsan: bt@cornucopia.net. For cookery articles in past issues of Cornucopia, see cornucopia.net/cookery

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The wines they are a-changing

OVER THE PAST DECADE TURKEY'S WINE INDUSTRY HAS COME OF AGE. IT IS NOW MORE THAN READY TO JOIN THE GROWN-UPS OF THE WINE-PRODUCING WORLD. KEVIN GOULD AND THE CORNUCOPIA TEAM PICK THE BEST OF A SPARKLING BUNCH. PHOTOGRAPHS BY BERRIN TOROLSAN

SIX WINES FROM THE URLA WINERY, AN INVENTIVE NEWCOMER. REVIEWED HERE ARE URLA, A BLEND OF NERO D'AVOLA AND THE REDISCOVERED URLA KARASI GRAPE, AND SEMI-SWEET SYMPOSIUM, MADE WITH BORNOVA MİSKETİ (MUSCAT)

Ten years ago at a tasting of Turkish wines for CORNUCOPIA I struggled to find even 10 wines that tasted like wine. Finding kind words to say about them was equally tricky. Times have changed: our tasting today has introduced us to some great wines, and many very good ones. In nearly 40 bottles there was hardly a dud. There was instead confirmation that Turkish winemaking is coming of age, with strong movement towards consistent quality, a definite sense of place, and enough individuality, vision, vim, verve, expertise and scope to offer some delicious surprises.

Turkey is remarkably well-suited to wine production: she is already among the world's largest producers of table grapes. Extensive research places southeast Turkey as the birthplace of *Vitis vinifera*, the first domesticated grape. What was needed, it seems, was for winemaking to be released from the icy grip of Tekel (the state alcohol and salt monopoly), and for a bright new generation of Turkish entrepreneurs to see that making wines can be cool, fun and potentially profitable.

Grapes can be commercially grown everywhere in Turkey except along the eastern Black Sea coast, where there's simply too much rainfall. Elsewhere some winemakers have chosen to plant international varietals, often with great success, while others are honouring native Turkish grapes, with the focus on five varieties. For whites, these are Emir, which thrives in the volcanic soils of Cappadocia, and Narince, whose higher acidity and firmer body offer tremendous blending potential. For reds, there's the light-bodied, spicy, velvety Kalecik Karası, Öküzgözü – so named because it's the size of a bull's (*öküz*) eye (*gözü*) – and the high-tannin Boğazkere.

The thirsty but disciplined CORNUCOPIA team tasted at the Kayra Wine Center in Cihangir and at Corvus Wine and Bites, on Akaretler. We're grateful to both, and also to Taner Öğütoğlu of Wines of Turkey for their professionalism, hospitality and great goodwill. Here are our favourites, any one of which would grace any table, anywhere.

THE CORNUCOPIA SELECTION

SPARKLING

Yaşasın 2009
Vinkara Winery, TL75

The first to be made in Turkey, this sparkler sets the bar very high. It's a *blanc de noirs* – a white from grapes more usually made into red wine. Produced by the *méthode champenoise*, Yaşasın is biscuity and elegant, with lovely fine moussey bubbles that extend the seductive, sun-kissed finish.

WHITE

Teneia 2010
Corvus Vineyards, TL25

Made by Reşit Soley on Bozcaada, the breezy North Aegean island previously known as Tenedos, Teneia employs Çavuş, an indigenous sweet table grape. This is a beautiful sipper: it has enough minerality to make each next sip interesting, plus a pleasing, romantic femininity that faintly echoes the sweetness of its mother grape. Pretty, but not glib.

Blend Bianco 2008
Corvus Vineyards, TL43

Çavuş, Vassilaki (another Bozcaada table grape) and Chardonnay spend 18 months in oak to become a wine that is an excellent balance between the full and the light. Chardonnay brings a velvet richness to the marriage, while its partners add a certain haunting, meditative quality. Intelligent winemaking indeed.

Mon Rêve 2010
LA Wines, TL35

Chardonnay and Chenin Blanc. The sort of dream that finds you in a bee-loud, bowered garden, with scents of sweet flowers (gardenia and jasmine, we thought) and warm cut grass. Very well made from unoaked organic Chardonnay and Chenin Blanc grapes, Mon Rêve is long, long, long in the mouth. Would be utterly delicious with a piece of grilled turbot or skate wings with *beurre noisette* and capers.

Mahra 2011
Yazgan, TL28.90

Founded in 1943, Yazgan was a big producer of small table wines. The winery is making huge strides towards the quality end of the market, and Mahra demonstrates how far it has travelled. Aegean Sauvignon Blanc can sometimes be a little like being stuck inside a candy factory. Mahra adds 15 percent Sultaniye to this blend, which, on paper at least, should only add to its sweet burden. Instead, sensitive winemaking has allowed the Sultaniye to temper the other grape's blowsiness, and added another element, which you might call sweet celery. This wine will make firm friends with spicy food, whether isot peppers from Urfa or Thai curries.

KALECIK KARASI
NARIN
Vinkara
YAŞASIN

Doruk Narince 2012
Vinkara Winery, TL29

Both sensitive and firm, like a good handshake, Doruk is excellent, interesting and impressive. Made with Narince grapes grown in Tokat (a two-hour drive from Vinkara's Erbaa winery), it has a delicious pineapple/quince-ish quality on the nose, and lingering honeyed citrus on the tongue. A beautiful expression of unoaked Narince, and a wine to flatter mezze.

ROSÉ

Arcadia Rosé 2010
Arcadia Vineyards, TL30

We admire and applaud Arcadia for trusting their wines enough not to filter them. This rosé is (quite correctly) the colour of onion skins, and a blend of Cabernet Franc (mostly) with splashes of Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. That it's unfiltered means the winemaker has less control over the ways in which the wine develops. The advantages of this are that the organic matter that's left – part of the wine's "brain", if you like – can develop in beautiful, illogical ways, giving the wine ageability. Rosé can be boring. This is not: it is rich, but not cloying, light but not frivolous, serious but not austere.

RED

Arcadia 2009
Arcadia Vineyards, TL60

Unfiltered and unrefined, this organic Cabernet Sauvignon/Cabernet Franc/Merlot wine should continue to develop. It's already a grown-up drop that is persistent without ever being overbearing. It displays a small, beaty combo of balsamic flavours that would play intelligent, catchy tunes with any dishes containing basil.

Öküzgözü Boğazkere 2008
Corvus Vineyards, TL42

Made with grapes grown in Diyarbakır and transported to Bozcaada by reefer truck. Reşit Soley has managed to coax a (previously unsuspected) juicy, berry-rich elegance from these native grapes. If ever there was a Turkish wine to drink with lemon-and-thyme-roasted chicken, this is it.

Corpus 2007
Corvus Vineyards, TL85

Corvus's top-line wine is a belter. Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Syrah and Cabernet Franc combine to make a wine to move you. Its epic, symphonic fruit has both power and beauty, and its flavours last and last, developing delicious new nuances the while. Corpus deserves international recognition.

Imperial Cabernet Sauvignon
Kayra Wines, TL106

Daniel O'Donnell (not the middle-of-the-road Irish singer) left his native California a decade ago to make wine in Turkey. His Imperial takes the pick of Cabernet Sauvignon grapes from more than one vineyard and turns them into a very posh wine. As a nicely oaked, cassis-and-cassia expression of an international varietal, Imperial manages to be interesting and classy, despite its over-the-top on-bottle branding.

Suvla Grenache Noir 2011
Suvla Wines, TL24

From a new winery that's unafraid to break the rules, this is a Dardanelles wine that will make many friends. We loved it. It's made by the carbonic maceration method common in dodgy Beaujolais Nouveau. Here, what you might expect to be thin, tart and drab is instead powerful and playful, persistent and full of fascination. So much for expectations. As well as being violet in colour, its nose and palate sing with bright violets and lilacs. Given a little more glass time, it blooms even further. This is the wine we chose to take home to drink later. Our Newcomer of the Year, and very possibly Wine of the Year.

Nero d'Avola & Urla Karasi 2010
Urla Winery, TL67.50
Nero d'Avola is the stalwart southern Italian blending grape. Urla Karası is a local varietal of Kalecik Karası, Turkey's very own black grape. The young boutique Urla Winery has blended them to achieve the epitome of peasant chic. Imagine this ripe, lusty wine with meaty, spicy pastas, with wholesome soups, garlicky roasts, and good strong cheeses. A screaming success.

SWEET

Symposium 2011
Urla Şarapçilik, TL31
This is not a sticky sweet wine, more of an off-dry sipper made from Bornova Misketi (muscat) grapes. Its nose is delicately rosé-ish. It would be delicious with chilli-spiked ceviches, mackerel sashimi, smoked salmon or lightly spiced curries.

Passito 2008
Corvus, TL62
Passito is the wine of Pantelleria, an island roughly the size of Bozcaada off the Sicilian coast. It is made from wind-dried grapes that are kept in the shade (so as not to become raisins). On Pantelleria, these grapes are Zibibo, the local name for Muscat d'Alexandrie. The Bozcaada version is made with Vassilaki and is a triumph. It's a golden wine – sweet but never sickly, rich but never heavy, fragrant and always delicious. Not cheap, but worth every *kuruş*.

Many wineries are now set up for visitors. See cornucopia.net/wine

Kevin Gould is a cook, writer and traveller. He is writing a biography of Chateau Musar

Corvus
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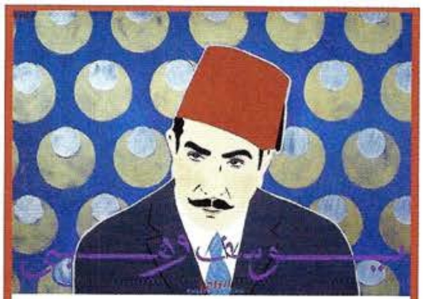

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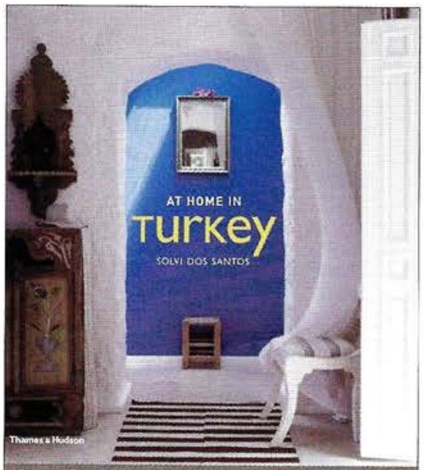

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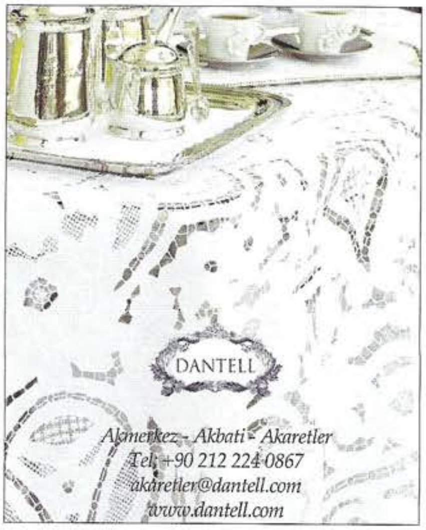

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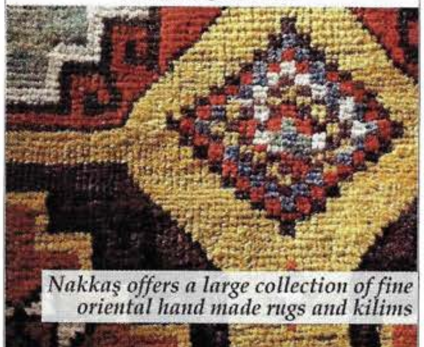

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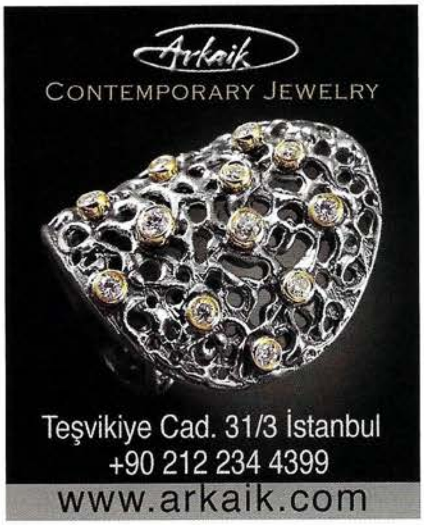
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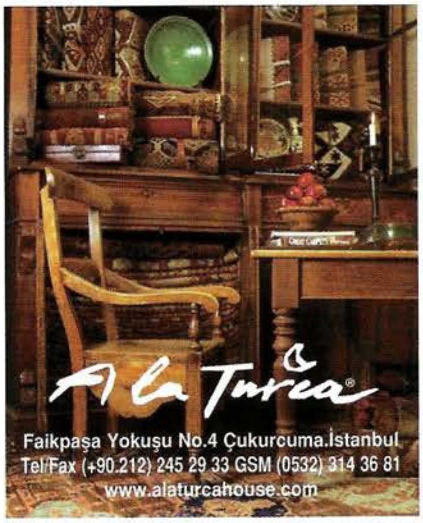
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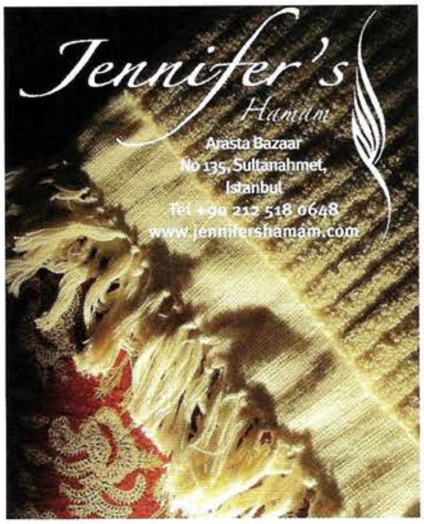
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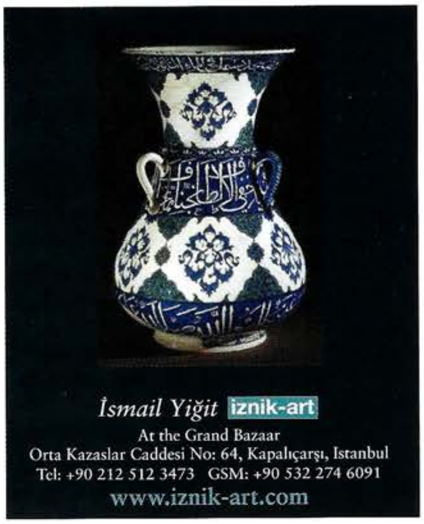
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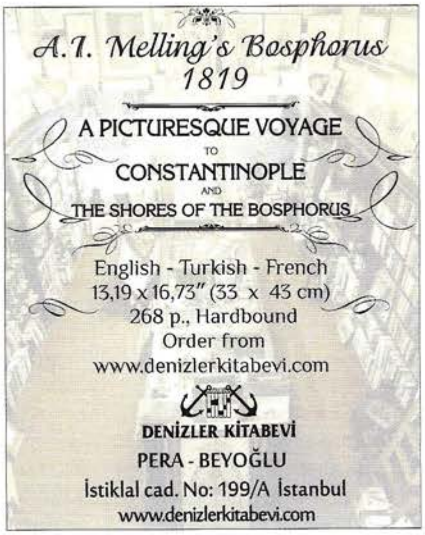
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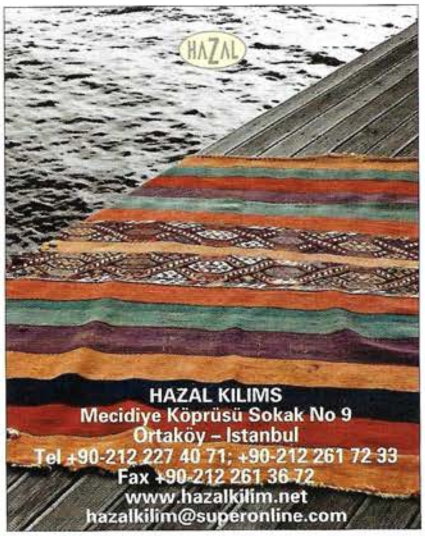
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The daredevil scholar

With a taste for adventure Indiana Jones would appreciate, the Dutch architectural historian Machiel Kiel has risked life and limb in his mission to expose the annihilation of Ottoman monuments in the Balkans. The art historian Holta Vrioni pays tribute to his work and exploits

ILKNUR KOLAY

Above Machiel Kiel in 2006, with an owl rescued by a colleague
Opposite, top Rare surviving murals at the Ethem Bey Mosque in Tirana. Begun in 1793 by a great-grandson of Süleyman Pasha Bargjini, who founded Tirana, it was finished in 1823 by his son Haci Ethem Bey
Centre The Süleyman Pasha Mosque in Berat, 1827–28, known as the Mosque of Bachelors, after a group of fighting men who met to pray there. Murals cover the interior and exterior
Bottom left The Halvetiyye Tekke of Sheikh Hasan in Berat, 1785
Right Bulldozing monuments, 1978

We often hear of journalists risking, even losing, their lives sneaking into dangerous zones to report crimes against lands and peoples. But you hardly expect to read of a scholar taking such risks in the course of his studies. Jumping from a hotel window to escape the attention of a regime's minions in order to visit a site; diverting Red Guard chaperones with the lure of beautiful women while you sneak a few measurements; plying the regime's "tour guides" with whisky and ending up incarcerated… Such tales come as something of a surprise from an art historian merely trying to study Ottoman architecture.

One cannot overstate Machiel Kiel's contribution over five decades to the study of the cultural and architectural legacy of the Ottoman Balkans. What is more, his pioneering research was mostly carried out during the Cold War, when extreme political constraints made surveys of any nature hazardous – his resolve did indeed embroil him in many adventures, not least a prison sojourn in Bulgaria.

Born in 1938 in the small village of Wormerveer, in northern Holland, Kiel developed an early taste for stone monuments, thanks to a teacher's fervour for architecture. A solo bicycle tour of the medieval monuments of northwest Holland was a prelude to subsequent trips on the Soviet buses that ran the Balkan roads hardly faster than a Dutch bicycle.

Kiel started his career as a restorer, working for several years at the National Service of Historical Monuments of the Netherlands. His first encounter with Ottoman architecture occurred in Greece in 1959, where he was involved in the restoration of the waterworks in Ioannina, after which he made his first visit to Yugoslavia.

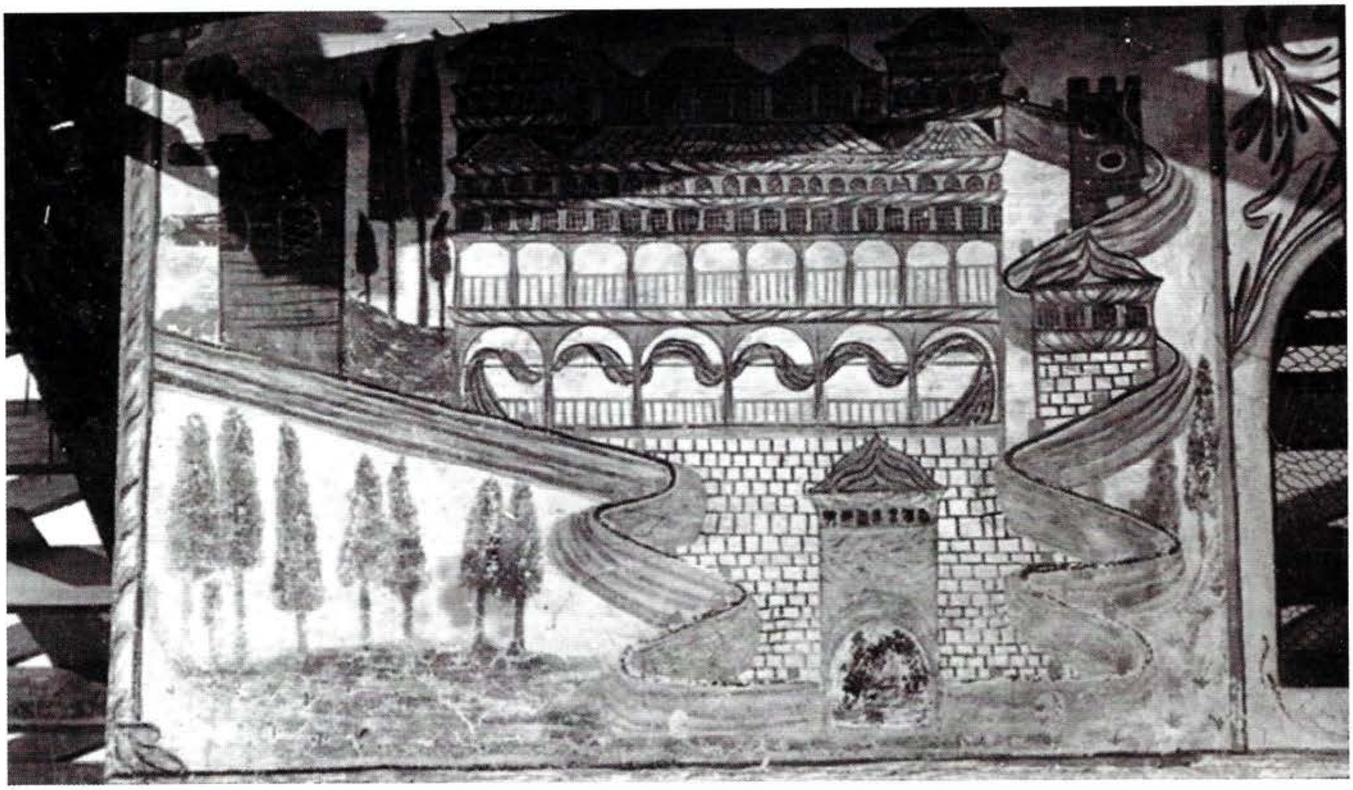
The mid-1970s marked two turning points in Kiel's life. First a work accident in 1976 ended his career as a restorer and encouraged him to devote his time to his studies at Amsterdam University. The second was meeting the renowned Turkish historian Ekrem Hakkı Ayverdi, by then over 70 and about to complete his inventory of Ottoman monuments in the Balkans. Meeting at Ayverdi's house in Istanbul, the two realised they shared many interests. While Ayverdi encouraged Kiel's enthusiasm for the transcription of Ottoman epigraphy, he could not match Kiel's reading skills in Serbo-Croatian and Bulgarian or his acute talent for long-term observation developed during his field trips. Kiel attributes the disarming directness of his defence of Ottoman architecture to his "Dutchness", but it was sharpened without a doubt in that house in the heart of the Imperial City. To this day Kiel acknowledges his indebtedness to the "Altmeister" for some of his deepest insights, transmitted during countless hours of conversation and correspondence.

After publishing his doctoral thesis, *Art and Society of Bulgaria in the Turkish Period* in 1985, Kiel began teaching Islamic architecture at Utrecht University and thereafter lectured or researched in Paris, Munich, Durham and at Harvard. It was, however, the publication in 1990 of *Ottoman Architecture in the Balkans* and *Ottoman Architecture in Albania* that fully revealed the inimitable "Kiel method", a combination of material and textual inquiry in the fields of architecture and inscriptions with demographic and other archival research.

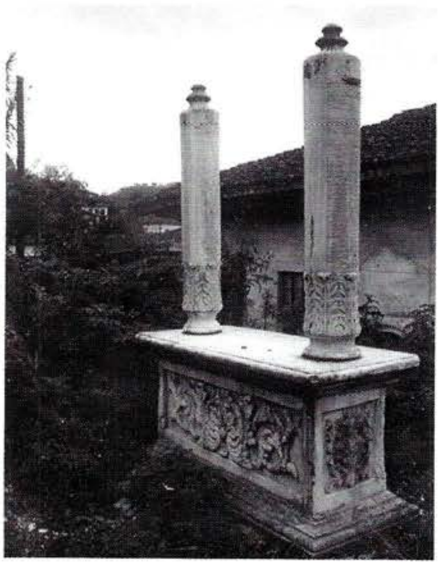
He brought his method to bear on the study of *tahrir* (population and tax registers), *mühimme* (registers of correspondence between the Divan and the provinces), *tapu* (title deed registers), *vakıf* (registers of pious foundations), *icmal defterleri* (registers of census and taxation) and *salnâme defterleri* (official yearbooks for each Ottoman province, started in the 1860s), and often applied it to the study of a single building. This set an unprecedented standard for placing Ottoman architecture in its historical context.

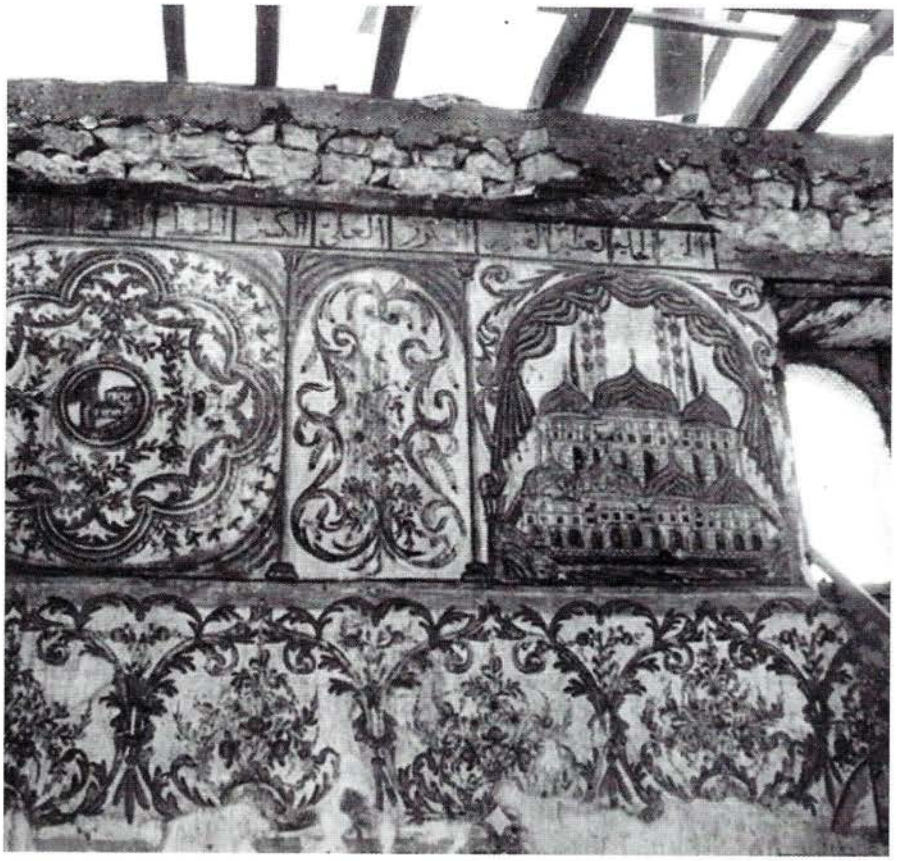
I came across Kiel's remarkable *Ottoman Architecture in Albania* while conducting my own research on the largest *ayan konaks* (seraglios, in local vernacular) of the former Ottoman Albanian provinces – Ottoman rule lasted from 1385 to 1912. Published some 22 years ago, *Ottoman Architecture in Albania* remains the only comprehensive study of the subject, essential reading for any scholar with an interest, and a wonderful read for initiated amateurs too. The monograph nonetheless remains disturbingly unknown to the Albanian reader.

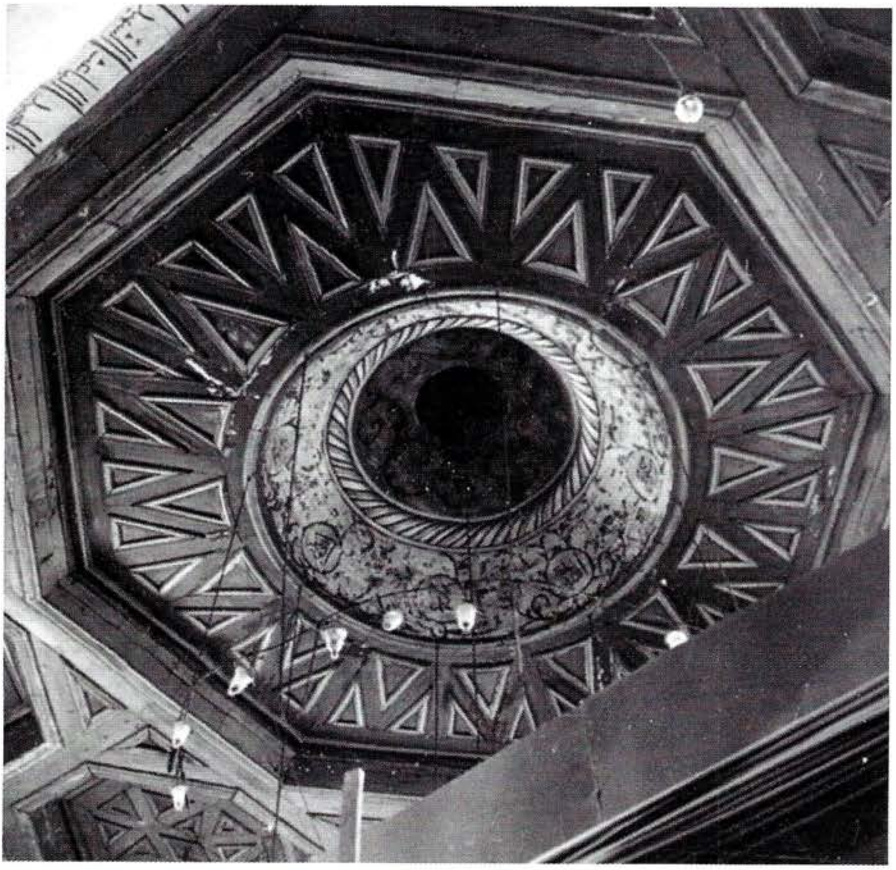
Fascinated by the extraordinary fact that Kiel's research on Ottoman Albania was carried out under the draconian travelling restrictions of Albania's North Korean era, I asked him to tell me how on earth he had managed it. I intended to publish his account concurrently with my Albanian-language translation of his monograph



MACHIEL KIEL PHOTO ARCHIVE







TOP LEFT STELAE COVERED WITH VERSE ADORN VIRIYONZADE FERIDUN BEY'S TOMB IN BERAT, 1906–7 ABOVE LEFT THE CLASSICAL MIRAHOR ILYAS BEY MOSQUE, GÖRICE (KORÇË), 1495–96 ABOVE BERAT'S SÜLEYMAN PASHA MOSQUE LEFT AN INSET WOODEN DOME IN THE MOSQUE THAT BEYAZID II BUILT DURING HIS 1492 CAMPAIGN IN ALBANIA. IT WAS REBUILT C 1800 BELOW THE 17TH-CENTURY CLOCK TOWER OF PEKLIN (PEQIN), REBUILT IN 1834. IN 1970 THE MOSQUE AND MINARET WERE DEMOLISHED

MACHIEL KIEL PHOTO ARCHIVE

'In Albania he developed a technique for measuring Ottoman edifices: while a couple of stunning women from the tour group distracted their gullible guides, he rapidly took some of the monuments' essential measurements'

(soon to see the light of day thanks to the publisher of the original English edition). Kiel was happy to comply.

With no official permission to conduct research, Kiel's fieldwork took place during his three visits as a tourist. Short on roubles after the breakaway from the Soviet Union and envying the tourist dollars pouring into Greece and Yugoslavia, the authorities decided to open the country's door, just a crack, and solely for organised cultural visits. Kiel was among the first Westerners admitted.

In the cities his tour group was ushered around by guides – the regime's lackeys. He was allowed to photograph certain historical edifices, and learnt to sketch plans quickly. In Albania he developed a technique for measuring Ottoman edifices: while a couple of stunning women from the tour group distracted their gullible guides, he rapidly took some of the monuments' essential measurements. In such absurd circumstances Kiel's great sense of humour was invaluable.

His first visit to the People's Republic occurred in 1967, six months after the regime started its cultural revolution and declared Albania the world's first atheist land. Anti-religious hysteria had left lofty minarets lying shattered across main city streets, blocking traffic entirely. Elsewhere flyers informed people how to tear down a minaret: "Attach a strong rope around the balcony, collect 30–40 strong people and start pulling; let loose, then pull again until it falls down."

But nothing compared to the "horrifying vision of the Day of Resurrection" Kiel experienced during a perilous escapade to visit a Sufi lodge, or *tekke*, in the village of Turan, near Görice (Korçë). The interior of the *türbes* next to the *tekke*, originally containing the tombs of a few Bektashi sheikhs, had been removed days earlier. In the graveyard graves stood open, bodies removed, their shoes and jackets lying around on the ground. The buildings now housed a chicken farm. Thanks to this incident we learnt that Bektashi dervishes could also be buried with their clothes – "a curious thing", as Kiel puts it.

On his second journey, in the 1970s, Baroness van Heemstra, from an old aristocratic Dutch family (Audrey Hepburn's mother was also a Baroness van Heemstra), joined his tour group. The baroness offered an introduction to her husband, the Dutch ambassador to Belgrade, who was also accredited in Albania. Schelto, Baron van Heemstra, visited Kiel in Wormerveer, where the latter shared piquant stories of his field research in Albania and showed him copies of his drawings, expressing concern as to their accuracy. Van Heemstra agreed to take them along on one of his official journeys to Albania and have them confirmed by the Tirana Institute of Monuments of Culture. Naturally, the Albanians were perplexed by a diplomat possessing such plans during the Cold War. Although Van Heemstra's response – "Well, we diplomats have our own channels" – probably added to their confusion, he managed to have the plans corrected and returned safely to Kiel.

KIEL WITH A FRIENDLY IMAM IN PLEVLIJE, MONTENEGRO (KARADAĞ) IN 1967, SOON AFTER HIS FIRST VISIT TO ALBANIA

Kiel did not publish his *Ottoman Architecture in Albania* before one further visit to the country, in 1983. The work is an impressive scrutiny of centuries of religious and military Ottoman monuments. Though many old bridges, minor mosques and monumental dervish convents in villages and smaller towns forbidden to foreign travellers escaped his attention, other fine examples of classical Ottoman architecture – their proportions, decorative elements and superb masonry – did not. One such is the Mirahor Mosque of the illustrious Ilyas Bey, master of the imperial stables of Beyazıd II, who by building a mosque and his own *türbe* in his birthplace in 1495 laid the foundations of the flourishing town of Görice (Korçë). Another is Süleyman the Magnificent's Mosque in Avlonya (Valona/Vlora), built during his 1537 Corfu campaign by his illustrious architect Sinan. Yet another is the Kurşunlu Mosque in Berat, built by the Albanian family of a Beylerbeyi of Anatolia who died in the Hungarian campaign in 1479.

Few Ottoman monuments, however, survived the tumult of time and modernity, with 97 percent of the Ottoman stone heritage erased entirely. Some were destroyed by the Ottoman authorities themselves in the cause of modernisation. The marvellous Castle of Avlonya, constructed for Süleyman in 1537 and Sinan's most impressive military monument on the Adriatic, was destroyed in 1906 to make way for a road from the port to the city centre. Others perished for similar reasons shortly before Zog I was proclaimed King of the Albanians. The marvellous Avlonyalı Konak vanished in 1925, with its beautiful 40,000-square-metre park, vast *harem* and *selamlık*.

The greatest massacre came during the People's Republic years, with entire cities forever disfigured. Kavalya (Kavaja), a wonderful Ottoman foundation of 1561 near Draç (Durrazo), took Evliyâ Çelebi's breath away in 1690. Peklin (Peqin) owed its beauty to its native son Abdurrahman Pasha, Ağa of the Janissaries of Mehmed IV, former governor of Egypt and Baghdad and last Ottoman governor of Buda, killed in battle in 1686.

Machiel Kiel's *Art and Society of Bulgaria in the Turkish Period* quotes the Arab Christian philosopher William Haddad: "The national state is the prison of the mind" – a prison that imposes narrow perspectives and prevents things from being seen in their greater context. It is for this reason that, as Kiel would put it, Ottoman architecture in the Balkans remains an unwanted heritage. ◆

Books by Machiel Kiel: *'Art and Society of Bulgaria in the Turkish Period' (Van Gorcum 1985); 'Ottoman Architecture in Albania 1385–1912'* (IRCICA *1990); Ottoman Architecture in the Balkans (Variorum 1990)*

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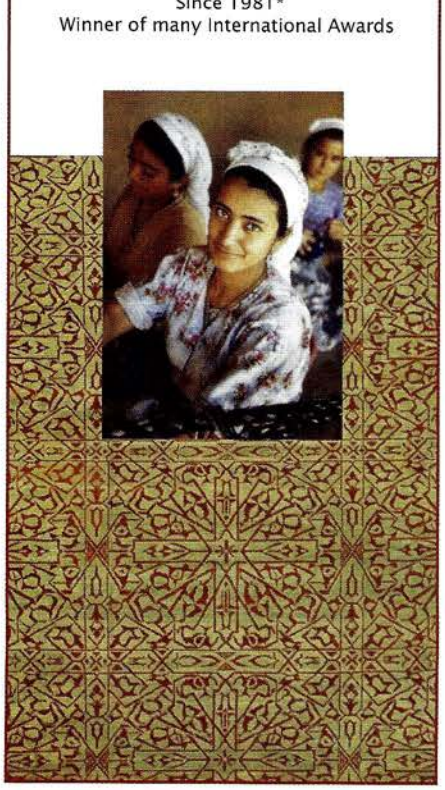

Village Voices

Azize Ethem, looking after her daughter in London, recalls with a certain nostalgia her early years in Turkey: bleak winters with constant power cuts, ferocious summers without a fridge, wild boar in the garden... Life was simpler then, if not easier

Sara, my daughter, has been having some serious medical treatment, so I have spent little time at home over the past six months. London's hustle and bustle has been invigorating and at times bewildering. After 30 years in the Turkish countryside I feel like a foreigner in the land of my birth. But I will be home in time for the spring blossom and the wild flowers on the lane through the olive groves. Home to all the comforts of a modern house, far removed from my first very basic cottage in Turkey.

I remember with a perverse nostalgia washing my clothes in a big plastic bowl, then rinsing them in the fast-running snow-fed stream. As the frail and infrequent electricity had no truck with anything more demanding than a low-wattage light bulb, a washing machine was not an option. And then there were the no-refrigerator challenges of searing-hot summers. I wonder if wild boar still wander through the garden of that Dereköy cottage. My friend Dorothy, in the hills behind Iznik, hears jackals barking at night, while Chevrel, near Yalova, has the baying of wolves to serenade her. On my slice of Keramet lakeshore all is quiet bar the occasional rustle of a hedgehog or cough of a fox.

In those early years villagers would send the infrequent foreign passerby down to my cottage. The writer Jeremy James arrived on his handsome stallion. I wonder where Jeremy is now. During my first winter a young Australian couple on their way to Jerusalem arrived with a donkey. I had not expected winter to be harsh on the Mediterranean and neither had they. We spent days huddled over the fire, with forays into the forest for pine cones and twigs. It was the bleakest winter on record, with the village shop doing a roaring trade in candles when the electricity cut out.

I still travel on the local *dolmuş*, which health and safety laws now dictate are no longer packed to overflowing or thick with the fug of cigarette smoke.

When Baba Murat, who lived alone at the far end of our orchard, was taken to hospital with heart problems, we worried about him. Selim installed a bell for him to alert us if he needed help. Months went by and we had forgotten the bell when suddenly the afternoon peace was shattered by an incessant shrill ringing. We raced up the orchard to find the old rogue sitting in his favourite chair, surrounded by visitors. He grinned and turned to his audience, saying: "I told you they'd come."

My friend "Bodrum Annie" reminds me of our quests for assorted items deemed essential to our lives. In the early 1980s the Turkish government was promoting exports while strictly limiting imports. Those were the years when Captain Ahmet of Dereköy made his fortune smuggling cigarettes and booze from the Greek islands. Most resident foreigners would leave the country every 90 days to renew our Turkish visas, which for me meant a day trip to Rhodes, where I would stock up on filter coffee, butter and a long list of items I just could not live without. Looking back, I am perplexed as to why I felt brown sauce was crucial to my wellbeing. New laws brought in this year mean foreigners have to apply for residents' permits.

In England I am not totally removed from all things Turkish. The local shop with the best fresh produce is run by Turks. The fish and chip shop is owned by a family from Adana, and staff at the café round the corner greet me in Turkish. Sara and I drove with our friend Burak Yiğit to the Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey to see the graves of the 14 members of the Turkish air force killed in England early in the Second World War. There is little information on what these young men were doing here, though a website mentions members of the Turkish Air Force training with the RAF in 1944. Why the RAF would be training airmen from a neutral nation in a time of war is puzzling. Burak, a lecturer at an Ankara university, plans to delve into the archives to find out.

I have missed a harsh winter with far more snowstorms than usual. Only when I get to Iznik will I know if the spring weather bodes well for the olive and fruit crops. But friends have kept me up to date. Renovations of the Hacı Hamza (Murat II) Hamam, built in the late 14th or early 15th century, are complete after 15 months of work. To my relief it has not become another cultural centre but is once again a working Turkish bath. I can't wait to see the inside and test it out. What better way to spend 10 lira, less than the price of a cappuccino in Dulwich? With a government grant, the Roman theatre is being unearthed and prepared for excavation. It was built between AD62 and 113, in the time of the Roman governor Pliny the Younger.

Five years ago a very likable local businessman bought a rundown hotel on the lakefront. Rather than restore it, he was persuaded by a silver-tongued contractor to demolish it and build a new five-star hotel. As costs soared astronomically the poor man had to borrow more and more, landing up bankrupt, and the huge white building has stood empty ever since. The Iznik newspaper reports it has been bought by a Bursa entrepreneur and is soon to open. Personally I don't think Iznik is a five-star kind of place, but time will tell.

With all now well healthwise, I will be home in a week, ready to work in the garden, catch up with friends and prepare for summer guests. ◆

Beyond the Orchard, by Azize Ethem (Çitlembik), is available from cornucopia.net, price £6.50

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LETTER FROM ANATOLIA

By Roger Norman

Abruptly, beyond Eskişehir's city limits, the countryside starts, a landscape of rock-strewn hills, stretches of pine and fir, steep-sided valleys crossed by small streams lined with poplars and willows. There is a surprising loveliness in these narrow vales, the loveliness of rich alluvial soil and deep-drinking trees overlooked by rocky scarps and overflown by eagles, ravens, vultures. The largest of these is the Akbaba or White Vulture, with a three-metre wingspan and a lifelong mate. On the ground are snakes and tortoises, hedgehogs and foxes, with the odd badger and hare and wild boar whose huge carcasses one occasionally spots on the roadside, a feast for Obelix but regrettably absent from local menus. The animal ecology appears to be supported by an abundant population of pretty field mice, preyed on by foxes, snakes and falcons, not to mention village cats and dogs.

Cash crops might be potatoes, tomatoes or melons, or the huge yellow pumpkin (*kabak*), sown after the spring frosts and growing well into autumn, when the harvest is collected in impressive ramparts in and around the villages. But the essential means of subsistence is still livestock, and the typical village is a community of cattle farmers and shepherds, who are watching their young disappear – along with the schools and schoolteachers, shops and shopkeepers – conscious of being part of a dying breed. Their choice, bluntly, is to get bigger or give up. Only large herds and large fields can support a mechanical milking parlour or a tractor, and if you are still working by hand you cannot earn enough.

The village I know best has 30 houses, more than half unoccupied, and only two or three teenagers in the entire community. Most of the farmers are old and it is hard to think what will become of the village in 10 or 20 years.

In the eyes of the government, development here means more schooling for children, but the more schooled you are, the less likely you are to stay. One wonders what the government is thinking, or if there is any serious thinking at all. Perhaps villages in the brave new world are expected to become recreational in function – providing weekend villas, golf courses, spas, nature parks and out-of-town restaurants. But these small villages still contain a substantial proportion of the population and preserve an ancient way of life. Formerly, villages were intimately connected with the economies of towns and cities as the source of milk and meat, eggs, vegetables and fruit; now these can come from anywhere, even overseas.

When, a few years back, a shop in Eskişehir's new shopping mall started selling ski-wear, I chuckled at the idea of farmers in ski hats. I was way behind the times, as usual. The times they are a-changing, but whither and wherefore is a testing question, and there is no accountant to put a figure on what is being lost. ◆

See Books section for Roger Norman's appreciation of Patrick Leigh Fermor.
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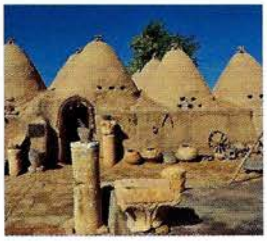

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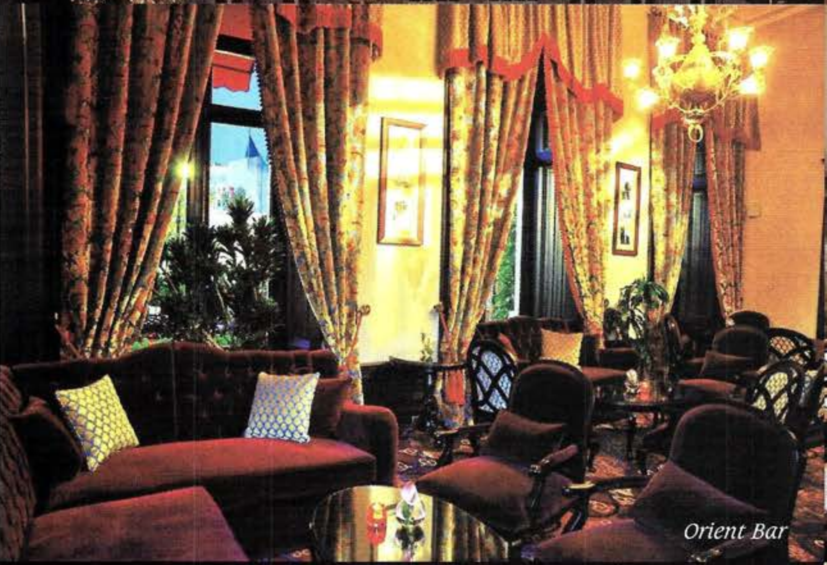

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Yummy enough for you?

ANDREW FINKEL FINDS HIMSELF BAFFLED BY THE DINING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TRIPADVISOR WEBSITE AND NOMINATES SOME ISTANBUL FAVOURITES OF HIS OWN

This is almost certainly the wrong place to make the confession, but for all my years of producing this column, I still suffer stage fright when someone asks me to recommend a restaurant. I take the question too seriously. The notion of dispatching people on a night they might regret overcomes me with such hesitation that I splutter and prevaricate like I've swallowed a chicken bone. What exactly is this person expecting? Is it the shock of the new or the comfort of the familiar? An aura of authenticity or somewhere urbane that will tickle their fancy? A banquet or a bargain, street food or a sommelier? I'd much rather suggest who they should marry.

So I marvel at the fearlessness of a website like TripAdvisor, which feeds off a veritable Niagara of volunteers, shamelessly dishing out free advice. Every now and then some malicious soul tries to wreak revenge on a snooty waiter or an uncooperative oyster. But in the main the entries are the postcards home of the not-so-innocent abroad. They radiate the glow of accomplishment in finding a safe haven in foreign parts. The word "yummy" pops up a lot.

However, what I find baffling about TripAdvisor for Istanbul is that it describes a city I simply do not know. The travel sections of *The New York Times* or *The Guardian* more often than not endorse the same-old-same-old safe choices, a reluctance to go out on a limb that I more than understand. But as I looked down the top 50 restaurants (the list goes up to 1,355), I had only ever heard of three. It is as if there exists a whole subculture here which people who live in Istanbul know nothing about. Of course, many of the choices are near the top tourist attractions, which is not where the citizens of Istanbul venture on an evening out. On the other hand, I do know a wonderful restaurant behind the Blue Mosque, one that gets three "grins" (my own Michelin-style accolade for "relaxed satiety"). I am afraid you'll have to buy me a drink if you want the name; I am not yet prepared to broadcast it to the world. Suffice it to say you can find it on TripAdvisor, but not in the top 500.

I thought, as a sort of Buddhist exercise in humility, of visiting the five top-ranked restaurants and reporting back my findings, but I concluded this would win me no thanks. Then suddenly I discovered a restaurant called Matbah, which had meteorically risen through the ranks to become TripAdvisor's number one. Matbah is the Ottoman for "kitchen" and it advertises historical reconstructions of dishes served at court. Historian friends who had advised the chef on ancient recipes sang its praises, and it was already on my list of place to try. Here was a rare chance to kill two birds with one stone.

I can understand Matbah's attraction. It is across the street from Aya Sofia, right in the middle of the tourist bustle, yet it has a private, secluded feel. In summer you sit on a terrace overlooking the courtyard and the domed cloisters of the Caferağa Medrese, a 16th-century theological school built by Sinan which has now been converted into a handicraft centre. The winter restaurant, an enclosed glass dining room, is less exotic and betrays a mildly institutional feel. The service is good, the wine list up to the job, the food not foolishly overpriced and the lavishly produced menu exudes an air of scholarship and good intentions.

Part of the pleasure is seeing how early times coped without the New World ingredients of tomatoes and chilli, how they used different ingredients to provide sweet or sour. The cold stuffed chard is flavoured with sour cherries, the cheese and pea börek is flavoured with honey. There is a lot of fruit: beef comes with apple, the chicken with grapes and dried apricots, the lamb with baked quince.

At the same time, if the food really is authentic, then it is clear the Ottomans were not addicted to intense flavours. Shredded goose mixed with rice and wrapped in pastry sounds fantastic but was comfort food, not haute cuisine. We tried one dessert, a brew of rose water and mastic with bits of almond and pomegranates. It was pungent and refreshing.

So would I recommend Matbah? I hum and haw. It is no dishonour that it has now declined to the number 10 spot on TripAdvisor – the explanation may be that it is attracting as many Turkish diners as visiting tourists. But I do think the menu fights against its own exoticism. The natural tendency, if you are already familiar with Turkish food, is to opt for the most weird and wonderful. In fact, a simple dish of spinach served with garlic and yoghurt turned out to be, well, yummy.

Perhaps the real answer lies with another historical meal – this time based on the elements of Byzantine cuisine and served at The Prime restaurant at Istanbul's Park Hyatt Hotel. It was both interesting and wonderful. The only problem was that it was a one-off treat, researched by the food historian Aylin Tan (clutching her copy of Andrew Dalby's *Tastes of Byzantium*). Byzantium cherished notions about what makes a good meal, all based on the humours that included bile and blood. To evoke or suppress these elements, they enlisted the usual suspects, such as salty and sweet, but also stranger elements like "tasteless" (think egg whites) or "melting". What was attractive about his dinner was Chef Julien Piquet's willingness to go off piste.

The food, though inspired by the flavours of Byzantium, was not a chapter-and-verse re-creation. So saffron, once a ubiquitous spice, found its way into a flavourful seafood soup with chickpeas and fennel. Rosemary, an equally important flavour, was present in a spume that covered the best neck of lamb I hope to eat – braised, weighted and re-roasted, then served with a covering of black truffle and brown morel sauce, and accompanied by beetroot mash. I think the lesson is that it's great to look back into history for inspiration, but a dish has no future without spontaneity and creativity and mouthwatering appeal.

Curiously enough, those virtues were present where I least expected to find them. Lucca (TripAdvisor's number 402) describes itself as a café-bistro-bar, but the very name has become synonymous with an affluent Bosphorus-side lifestyle. I had never thought of eating there. Never thought I'd even get in. It is surrounded by a wall of 4x4s revving on the street outside. Then an elite guard of chain-smokers forms an intimidating phalanx around the door. However, I was invited, and

I persevered. In fact, the interior – bright and not at all fussy – is less snooty than a Home Counties gastropub – noisier perhaps, but the food is a great deal better. Lucca is, surprisingly enough, a neighbourhood haunt. I went back, and bumped into the same people I'd met there the first time. I have a sneaking suspicion some are there every night. Certainly one reason to keep coming back is that the management clearly cares about what it serves to eat and drink.

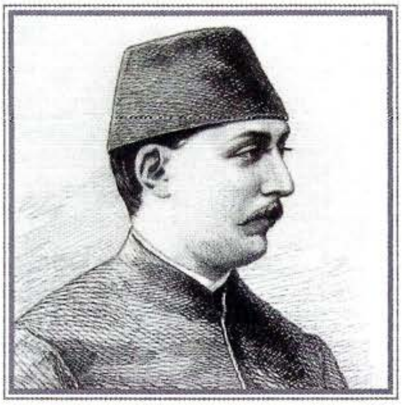
There is a fashionable array of small plates and tapas, all carefully constructed with good ingredients, including foie gras crostini served with fig chutney and an interesting array of charcuterie. At the same time it all feels very casual. One of the house specials, pappardelle with duck and a sweet soy sauce, is appealing and fun to eat. I didn't sample the cocktails, which have a certain fame, but I did work my way through a list of Turkish wines from small producers and discovered the joys of a 2009 Vinkara Kalecik Karası, aged 14 months in oak.

Yet to appear on TripAdvisor, and the most eccentric evening out I've had in quite a while, was the "guerrilla dinner" cooked by an actor-director-producer I admire, Ezel Akay. Every Friday he goes behind the counter of a superior fast-food restaurant called **Kanzaq**, not far from the Akmerkez shopping centre. He then produces a set dinner for friends, customers or just passers-by. It's not expensive but it is fabulous and brimming with what I would call gastronomic intelligence. Ezel has an understanding not just of what makes a good dish but of what makes a great meal. He calls his style "Turkish fusion": it is not an East-meets-West splodge but a synthesis of Turkish regional cuisines.

There are a few recognisable dishes, albeit with an extra twirl – a humus starter is made with roasted chickpeas (*leblebi*) for a nuttier flavour. Almost everything else is wildly different and entertaining, down to the Ben-and-Jerryish comic names he assigns the different dishes. *Şaman Tarhanası* (no point trying to translate) is less a soup than a spicy porridge and like nothing you've eaten before. Lamb comes stuffed in beef, spiced and baked in a sausage-like casing. Particularly delicious were fried dumplings (*mantı*), a beef filling in a bread dough and a tomato sauce. They were served with a completely different type of dumpling – meat beaten paper-thin, seasoned with a coriander pesto, then rolled in *yufka* pastry, sliced, slow-baked then shallow-fried, and served in a beef and saffron broth. Dessert was a baklava pastry crepe filled with pomegranate "leather" and nuts but no sugar.

Dish followed dish, but the result was contentment with no sense of being overfed. And yes, I would recommend it, but you have to be nimble and book in time. ◆

Matbah Ottoman Hotel Imperial, Caferiye Sk 6/1, Sultanahmet, Istanbul; +90 212 514 6151; matbahrestaurant.com
The Prime Park Hyatt Istanbul, Bronz Sk 4, Maçka, Istanbul; +90 212 315 1234; istanbul.park.hyatt.com
Lucca Cevdetpaşa Cad 51B, Bebek, Istanbul; +90 (0)212 257 1255; luccarestaurant.com
Kanzaq Restaurant Akatlar Mahallesi, Zeytinoğlu Cad, Etiler, Istanbul; +90 212 351 0867 or 0869; kanzaq.com.tr



Notes from a sultan

A new ballet, *Murad V*, based on the life of the Ottoman Empire's shortest-ruling monarch, is to be premiered in Ankara on May 3 by the Ankara State Ballet Company (www.dobgm.gov.tr).

"They describe him as one possessed, sitting on his sofa, motionless and speechless, smoothing his thin moustaches and beardless chin with his right hand hour after hour the livelong day..." So wrote *The Times* in August 1876. With a score by Emre Aracı based partly on the Sultan's own compositions, this promises to be a highly original production. Murad, a man of cultivated tastes, spent the last 28 years of his life under house arrest at the Çırağan Palace on the Bosphorus, after being deposed following a nervous breakdown. He played the piano and penned short salon pieces including polkas, quadrilles, schottisches and waltzes for members of his family who shared his captivity.

The arrangement is by Emre Aracı with the conductor Bujor Hoinic, choreography by Armağan Davran and Volkan Ersoy, and set designs and costumes by Savaş Camgöz.

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www.fourseasons.com/bosphorus

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www.divan.com.tr info.divanistanbul@divan.com.tr

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www.perapalace.com

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www.swissotel.com/istanbul istanbul@swissotel.com

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www.istanbul.grand.hyatt.com

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www.kempinski.com/istanbul

reservationoffice.ciraganpalace@kempinski.com

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www.armadahotel.com.tr info@armadahotel.com.tr

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www.kempinski.com/bodrum

reservations.barbaros@kempinski.com

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www.sumahan.com info@sumahan.com

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The House Hotels' latest offering is in Ortaköy, on Istanbul's European shore. Stylish apartments, built in the 1890s for a dynasty of Ottoman architects, overlook the prettiest seaside square in Istanbul. They have been transformed into a luxury design hotel. Most of the 23 rooms have balconies and stunning sea views – from the 3 rooftop suites, you see all the way from the Topkapı Palace to the Bosphorus Bridge.

www.thehousehotel.com

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www.tasotel.com info@tasotel.com

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www.gulevisafranbolu.com gulevi@canbulat.com.tr

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www.museshouse.com info@museshouse.com

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www.ibrahimpasha.com
contact@ibrahimpasha.com

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www.kocaev.com info@kocaev.com

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www.emzoe.com info@emzoe.com

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www.museum-hotel.com
info@museum-hotel.com

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www.georges.com reservation@georges.com

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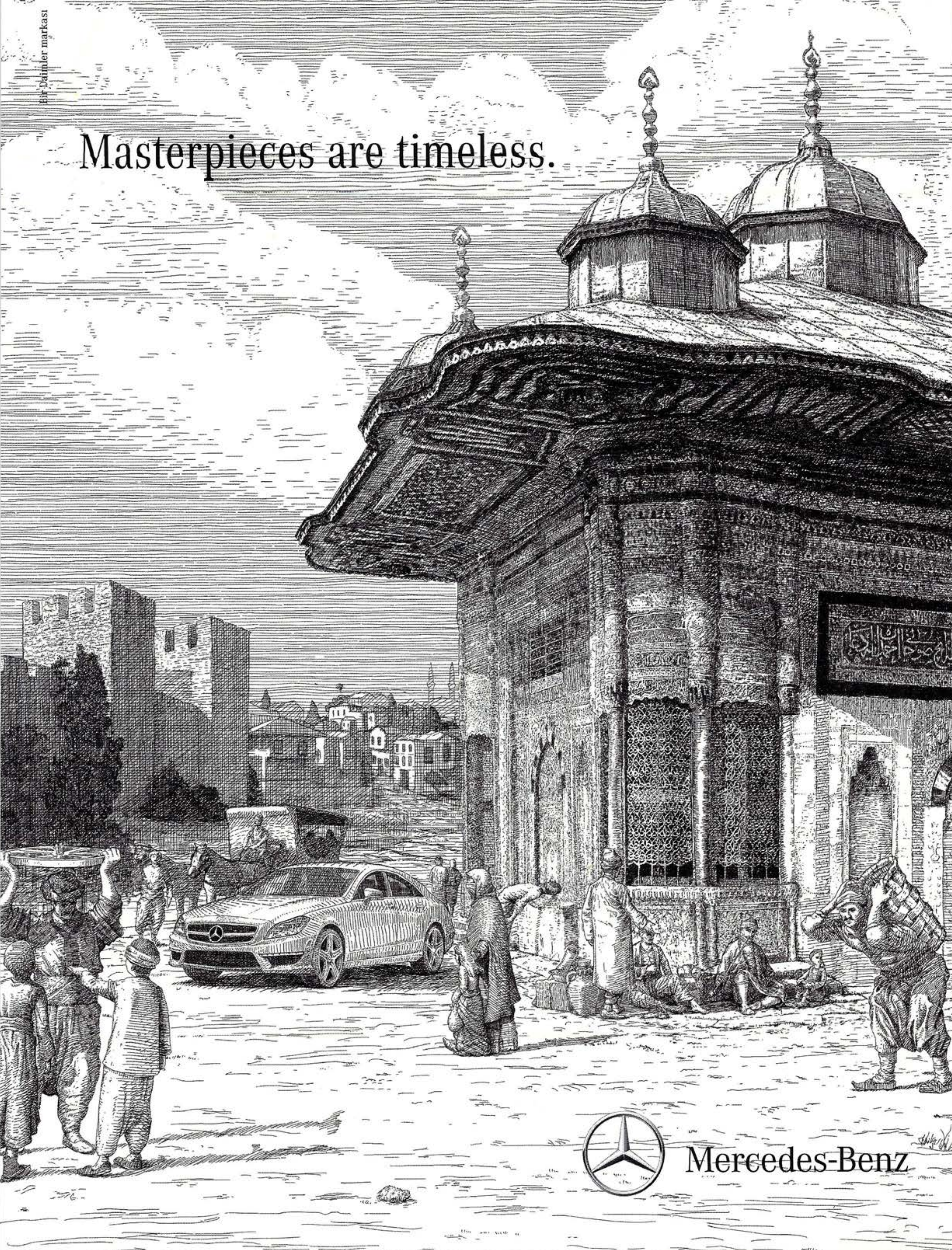
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